UNDER HEAD-HUNTERS' EYES

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UNDER HEAD-HUNTERS' EYES

ALVA C. BOWERS is by birth an American, born in Mount Pleasant, Pa. After several years in the pastorate, he was sent to India, with his wife, in 1900, interrupting his course at Findlay College when he was within six months of graduation. On furloughs he engaged in special study, especially in 1920-1921, when he took post-graduate work in Sanskrit in the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, for which he had been prepared by his direct contact on the mission field with Oriental vernaculars, six of which he speaks, as well as several dialects.

He has had responsibility for the administration of large areas for the Mission in Assam. One of his greatest successes was in the development of self-dependence among the churches, so that administration of much of the work could be taken over by his people, leaving him free to give more time to training leaders.

During his twenty-six years of missionary life, he made wide acquaintance, not only with the plains people and the wild, head-hunting hillmen, but also with the officers of the British Government and the white men of the business communities, and made himself conversant with the history, the religions, and the languages of India.

At present (1929) he is pastor of the Baptist Church in Elmhurst, N. Y.

SIBSAGAR, "SIVA'S SEA"

The Great Artificial Lake Constructed During the Reign of Rajah Sib Singh, About Three Hundred Years Ago. Three Temples to Different Hindu Deities Are Shown. The Court Building of the British Government Is on the Right, and the Mission Bungalow Can Be Seen Among the Trees on the Extreme Left

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UNDER HEAD-HUNTERS' EYES

By A. C. BOWERS

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DEDICATED

to

The Memsahib, My Wife

INTRODUCTION

India has become one of the great markets for American manufactures, and anything that affects the economic condition of her people is of interest to the United States. But more than this, the ancient glamor of the Orient contending with modern aspiration, murderous communal strife, and the exposition of fearful social and moral conditions, set over against proofs of deep religious sincerity —all these have awakened concern over the state of India in the minds of large numbers of thoughtful people, especially among Christian workers in the United States and England. But the contradictions involved are so confusing that intelligent men scarcely know what to believe, for naturally they all cannot be true.

When it is realized that there are one and a half million followers of Hinduism, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, and other similar Oriental faiths in the United States, and that their doctrines are being spread among our own people— when this is realized it brings home to all Christians the great importance of understanding the conditions which have resulted from belief in these religions in the lands where they are prevalent. Their propaganda is insidious and must be met in this land as a matter of self-protection.

Assam being the northeast frontier of India, and her people being a cross-section of a majority of the tribes and nations of the peninsula, the story of the process which is transforming this wild province is to a large extent the tale of the entire land.

Having spent most of the past twenty-five years among the people of Assam and Bengal, and finding that the

fundamental cause of the revolution in their ideals and outlook is in reality the impact of Christianity, supplemented by modern education, medicine, business, and government—which in turn are dependent on Christian morality for their very existence—we set forth in this book some of the evidences of these facts as they have appeared from history, as well as in our own experience.

Wild beasts and crude conditions have played such a large part in the lives of the men and women who were the pioneers in Assam, that the stories of some of their intensely interesting experiences should be written before they are entirely forgotten.

In addition to showing that neither Hinduism, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, education, self-government, nor any other plan has ever served to produce fulness of spiritual or social life, the purpose of this book is to show from our personal experiences and contacts that the idealism of Christ is already bearing fruit in giving healing and peace to many. On this account, and also because it is the desire of the Master whom we profess to love and serve, it is the author's earnest hope that more earnest attention will be given to the challenge which India offers in her own land and also in our United States. It is a hard task, but difficulties have never thus far deterred Christians from doing their duty, when once the responsibility was understood. We believe that the knowledge of India's need will meet with adequate response.

A. C. B.

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PROLOGUE

The story-teller tells a tale
  Of the land of King Sib Singh,
It wanders up and down the vale
  And in and out, and round about
The Brahmaputra's gentle swale.
  Men and mice, and monkeys queer,
And missionaries calm and staid,
  Rajahs, ranees, cobras, crows,
Appear and join the grand parade.
  Sighs and smiles, and tears of joy—
A feast of things both old and new
  Served up with a racy sauce
Which is the story-teller's brew.

This is a story of the days of old and of today; of Assam, the land of Rajah Sib Singh, and of the modern crusaders, the planter and the Padri. It is in reality a tale of the Brahmaputra River—the River of the Son of Brahm—and of a few of the feeble flashes which, like the flicker of the evening firefly, wove in the dance of life, up and down, in and out, over the broad bosom of his irresistible flood.

In particular, it is a tale—a veritable necklace of tales—the beads of which began to assemble over twenty-five years ago when the Padri and his wife, who had just landed in Calcutta, were hustling in good home style to get their baggage through the customs.

The Indian sun was hot, and every one was perspiring. The heat, arising from the cobbles of the court and reflecting from the surrounding corrugated-iron sheds, danced and shimmered toward the brazen sky. A friend

who had been in India for some years, stopped the party in the middle of the road and said:

"Wait a minute, Padri. Here is a poem of Kipling's for you to memorize."

It seemed strange for any one to wish to teach poetry in such heat as would frizzle an egg: and there was all that freight to get through before evening . . . but, courtesy to elders! . .

"This is the poem," said their guide:

It is not good for the Christian's health
To hustle the Aryan brown,
For the Christian riles,
And the Aryan smiles,
And it weareth the Christian down;
And the end of the fight
Is a tombstone white
With the name of the late deceased,
And an epitaph drear,
"A fool lies here
Who tried to hustle the East."

Twenty-five years of the fascination and glamor of Assam with its sweat and dirt, tigers and elephants, snakes and monkeys; years of work with and among the bodies and souls of babus and farmers, of head-hunters and game-hunters—a quarter of a century of such a life throws such pictures across the screen of the mind as make the imaginings of the movies seem tame and unreal.

Even the journey of the Padri and the Memsahib, his wife, from Calcutta to Assam, took them along a highway of marvels, the mighty Brahmaputra River—the road of the ages to Rajah Sib Singh's country. This river rises a thousand miles back of the Himalayas in the mystery of the shadow of Mt. Everest in Thibet and bursts

through the great range of hills which are occupied by the fierce head-hunting Abors. The pass from Thibet, and the paths from China and Burma, have brought traders with skins and precious stones, and also hordes of invaders with slaughter and woe, down into the rich valley during the ages of the past. But the mighty river itself has been the highway of the traders and invaders from Bengal and the great world of the westlands. Beyond the ken of history the Aryans from India, and later within historical times, the Mohammedans from the west, and last of all the British, plowed their way against the muddy current to conquer and possess the land.

THE ASSAM MISSION FIELD

I

WILD KAMPTIS OF SADIYA

Less than a hundred years ago, just as today, the surroundings of the fort at Sadiya on the extreme northeast frontier of the British possessions in India were exquisite. The sun shining on the beautiful, green plains which shaded into the almost black of the dense forests, with the snows of the eastern ranges of the Himalayas as a background, made a setting for a picture worthy of the Great Artist.

Colonel White, the officer in charge of the post, was a young man. He had come to India in the service of the Crown and had been sent to Sadiya to hold this portion of the newly acquired Province of Assam. The Kamptis, a warlike tribe which had come from the hills of Upper Burma, were somewhat out of hand and causing him some worry. It was a lonesome place. Excepting the two or three subordinate officers who were in charge of the Indian troops, the nearest white men were many days' journey away down the Brahmaputra. The Commissioner of the entire country, Major Jenkins, was located at Gauhati, and at the most, he saw him twice a year when he came up on his regular tour of inspection. The last time he had been in Sadiya they had discussed not only the Kamptis and what a nuisance they were becoming, but they had talked over the whole problem of how to deal with people who were worshipers of demons, treacherous and tricky, and who had no idea of ordinary, every-day truthfulness.

"I'll give a thousand rupees," said Major Jenkins, "if

the missionaries in Burma will send some one to teach them. The only thing that will make them better is Christianity. I'll write to the Mission when I get to Gauhati."

In the Mission in Burma to which he wrote, Nathan Brown and his wife were among the youngest workers. The Missionary Union had sent them to help carry on the work which Judson had started with almost unspeakable suffering. During the four years since they had landed, they had set up their little home, fitted up with packing-cases for at least a portion of the furniture: had put up clean, thin, white curtains at the windows, and with a few little pictures on the whitewashed walls, were quite comfortable in this their first home in Burma. The years had been very busy ones for them. Studying the new language in the intense heat and humidity had been especially hard, but there was no monotony in life. The beauty of all nature about them, the wonderful pagodas and the curious customs of the people kept them constantly interested; but their great desire to be able to speak to the people and to be of help to them was their great incentive to work—and as it turned out they did not remain in Burma!

While peace had been signed between the British and the Burmese about eight years before this time, only recently had the word come to Rangoon that the entire Assam valley had been cleared of the last of the diabolical troops which had terrorized the miserable country for years. The letter from the Commissioner regarding missionaries being sent to his Province, required an answer; and, although there were millions in Burma who had never seen a white man nor heard the message he brought, yet this seemed to be an opportunity to get into China—

through the back door as it were—the front one was closed to all the world—and it was decided to spare men from the small force they had, and Nathan Brown and O. T. Cutter with their wives were sent to Assam.

Their journey was long and tedious. Four months was a short time in which to make the trip from Calcutta, across the Bay of Bengal from Rangoon, to Sadiya. It was necessary to pull the small country boats hundreds of miles against the strong current of the river. Days were spent by the boatmen walking back and forth on the low roofs of the boats poling them up-stream where they could not use the towing-ropes; but it was interesting. Wonderful sights were seen, as they are to this day, but at that time there were infinitely more of them. Rhinoceroses came down to the river to drink. Tigers and wild pigs swam by on the floods, and deer and buffaloes could be seen almost daily along the upper reaches.

It was not an uncommon thing to look up the sand-banks as the boat moved slowly along, and see a crocodile come up out of the water with a fish two feet long in its mouth. The crocodile would rest its forefeet on the bank and, with a toss of its head, throw the fish into the air. Long practise had made perfect, and the fish would invariably come down head first, pointing right down the throat of the crocodile. Two or three gulps of the rubber-like throat, accompanied by scissorslike motions of the long jaws, and the fish would disappear.

The story of the first few years in Sadiya has been told frequently. Building bungalows and workrooms, setting up the press, translating parts of the Bible and many hymns, and getting all these printed; suffering from fever and not knowing the cause but believing that it arose from a poisonous miasma from the ground; having, lov-

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ing, and losing little children—all these labors amaze men of these later generations! All this was done in a semi-tropical climate which is debilitating to a white man; and from the number of graves, is death to the white woman. It was done in a day when the remedies for fever, small-pox, cholera, and a host of other diseases had not been discovered. Six years of such labor in the Orient had begun to tell on the men and women in Sadiya, and, instead of any decrease in the amount to be done, impending danger added to the difficulty of their increasing work.

After many letters had been sent urging that men should be appointed to help, the news that a young man by the name of Thomas was on the way gave them great encouragement and hope. Finally it was known that he had reached Calcutta. Then the period of four months required for the slow trip on the river was almost up, and he was expected in Sadiya any day, and at last boatmen came to the bungalow—but their story was one of death! On account of illness among the party Thomas had come ahead of the larger boat in a small dugout. The river was high, and the boatmen were having the greatest difficulty pulling against the strong current. On the lower reaches the sloping sandbanks gave men a place to walk and pull the boats against the stream, but here nearer the hills, the forests came down to the very water's edge, and in the rains the river spills over the banks and floods the country for miles on either side.

Thomas was sitting under the low, mat cover of the boat. Four months sitting or lying, much of the time burning with fever, had begotten patience. India moves slowly, but a boat rowed against a current that as often as not shoves it back down the stream in spite of all that the oarsmen can do, is about the great snail so far as speed

is concerned! At a place opposite Saikowa, just below Sadiya, the boatmen were in difficulty. The water was so deep that no pole or bamboo could reach the bottom, and it was impossible to walk along the bank to pull the boat on account of the trees and thorns. They were keeping close to the shore on account of the advantage that the lessened current there gave, and often a swirl also would help them up. In working around two large trees that overhung the water, they suddenly saw that one of them was falling out over the boat! Calling on their gods and straining to the limit of their strength they were not able to get entirely clear, and the limbs of the tree fell across the cover of the boat, pinning Thomas under it and submerging the entire fore part—and a career ended in sight of its beginning!

In Sadiya the outlook was very dark indeed. The gloom cast over the officers and the missionaries by the tragedy was not dispelled by any cheerful prospect among the surrounding tribes. The Kamptis about the fort became more bold and troublesome. They drove the villagers away, and it became increasingly difficult to obtain supplies, particularly rice for the Indian troops. Even the white people did not have enough to eat. In addition to this there were constant threats of an attack on the fort, and should this happen, it would mean that the Mission houses would be destroyed first, for they were some distance from the stockade and right on the path along which the attack would come.

On a dark night in January, 1839, the missionaries heard the wild shoutings of large bands of Kamptis and heavy firing from the direction of the fort. They rose hastily, threw on a few clothes and, taking the children and a handful of belongings, ran toward the bank of the river.

There were boats there, and they hoped for safety through these. As they ran they saw that the stockade had been set on fire. The light increased, and they could see the forms of the warriors in their wild war-dress, running back and forth. Pushing their boat out into the stream they sat and waited, never knowing when a boatload of the Kamptis might come and attack them. The shooting died down, and the fire burned itself out, and still, to their surprise, there was no attack on their own homes. Waiting and shivering till dawn, they heard the morning bugle blown and realized that the British had been the victors. They went as quickly as possible to the fort and found that although the attack had been a surprise and the Kamptis had been able to penetrate within the defenses, yet the troops had rallied, and as soon as they could again get possession of the magazine had made short work of the head-hunters. Colonel White and eighty others had been killed in the skirmish.

No one knows why the Mission was not attacked. It was a half mile away from the fort and was undefended; but as a result of the attack and the constant dread of further ones, and particularly on account of the great difficulty in obtaining supplies, both the Government and the Mission removed down the valley to a place on the edge of the Naga Hills called Jaipur. This was found to be even more unhealthy than Sadiya, not on account of the wild tribes living all about but on account of fever, dysentery, and other diseases; and after several years they all trekked again, this time to Sibsagar, the place dear to the heart of Rajah Sib Singh when he ruled Assam.

II

SIB SINGH'S SIBSAGAR

In the year 1743, when the swift sailing vessels from the ports of New England were running rum, molasses, tobacco, and such things in the very modern bootleg spirit, Rangpur, which is Sibsagar, capitol of the Ahom kingdom in the Brahmaputra valley in upper Assam, was all stirred with excitement one day. Four white men had been seen at the mouth of the Janzi River where it joins the larger stream. Small, fast dugouts had just come in through the canal that connected the city with the Brahmaputra and had brought the word to the Rajah, Rudra Singh, father of Sib Singh, and even he was in wonder as to the meaning and purpose of the visit of the men from across the Seven Seas.

Early the next morning the guards announced the arrival of the larger boats with the visitors. History tells us that they were Englishmen, and that their names were Bill, Godwin, Lister, and Mill. When they landed they were received with great ceremony and conducted to the palace by the Bor Burua, the Chief Minister, and as a mark of special honor were met at the gate of the palace by the Rajah himself. After days of feasts and various entertainments on the grounds near the palace, where stood the Rung Ghor, the House of Joy, built for the royal family, as a kind of a box from which they could watch the elephant and tiger fights without danger, a special *shikar* (hunt) was arranged in the enormous jungles toward the Naga Hills which could be seen towering in the

distance. Hundreds of royal elephants were used for beating the high grass, and with their match-locks, and those who were more used to simpler weapons using bows and arrows and spears, they secured tigers, buffaloes, and deer. But when, after a most enjoyable time, these adventurers left Rangpur, there remained nothing but their names and the fact of their visit to intrigue the curiosity of later generations.

Srijut Ganesyam, Chief Architect to the Rajah at Rangpur, had just finished his midday meal. He sat on a fine woven mat, resting. A servant stood near waving a great fan to keep him cool, for the day was hot, and the little breeze as well as the shade of the great *peepul* tree which spread its beautiful greenness above him, was very grateful. A messenger from the Rajah was announced. Being given permission he entered the courtyard and bowing low said:

"Sir, His Most Excellent Majesty calls you."

"Return with my salutation. I follow immediately," answered Ganesyam.

When he entered the royal presence he found the Rajah alone. This was not unusual, for being intensely interested in the magnificent temples which were being built in honor of the new Hindu gods which he had recently accepted, he had often summoned the architect for consultation in private.

"Ganesyam," he said, "since I have called you from your home in Bengal and have made you chief of the builders you have been a faithful servant. The beautiful temples are completed, and their foundations will stand to all time to the glory of my reign. But as you see, the Dikko River runs between our palace and the old city of Gahrgaon, and cuts us off from the royal lakes and bury-

RUINS OF FIRST PALACE, GAHRGAO

These Are About Eight Miles East of Sibsagar, Which Is Just Across the Dikko River from the Later Capital City, Rangpur

THE "RONG GHOR"

The Play House of the Ahom Kings. Near the Ruins of the Royal City, Rangpur, Just Opposite Sibsagar. Animal Fights and Other Sports Were Held Near. Royalty Would Sit Up High in Safety When Elephants or Buffaloes Got Out of Hand

ing-ground at Cherideo. To make it more convenient could you now build a bridge across the river?"

"Assuredly, your Majesty, but it will be a difficult undertaking. The great temple at Jaisagar, though it is a hundred cubits to the top of the golden ball, and fifty cubits through at the base, was easy to build because the foundation rests on solid clay. But the bridge is different because the foundations must be laid many cubits beneath the level of the running water, and the arches must be made to grow together without the aid of supporting timbers; but by your grace and favor it can be done."

"What materials must we gather?" asked the Rajah. "It should not be too great a drain on the labor of the people. The great lords of my Council have murmured because of the many forced drafts of their churls which were necessary in building the palace and temples, as well as the lakes and roads which have just been completed."

"It would not be too heavy, my Master," answered Ganesyam, "just the usual brickmaking, the lime and sand and such. But to enable me to make royal bricks, after the secret formula, eggs both of ducks and chickens are necessary. Can a royal order be promulgated requiring each family to provide one egg of each kind? Included in this the usual orders for labor drafts could be added."

"This shall all be done," said the Rajah. "I give you leave to depart."

Calling the Chief Scribe, the order to prepare the proclamation was given. But, when the nobles heard of this, for nothing went on in the palace that their spies did not report, they met secretly and on account of their jealousy of Ganesyam, decided that this was their opportunity to get rid of him.

The following day, in the course of the usual council, the nobles all being present and being seated in their ordinary places, the Bor Barua rose and spoke his mind and their own in carefully chosen phrases:

"Your Majesty, as is the custom in your honorable realm, matters pertaining to the glory of your illustrious house are to us, your humble slaves, precious as our own eyes and right hands. You are our father and mother, and we are but the dust under your feet.

"Being dismayed to learn that secret mischief is being plotted against yourself and the kingdom of your fathers, we desire to bring the matter to your august notice in order that with the aid of your great wisdom the danger may be averted.

"As you know, the Bengalis on the lower reaches of the great river have looked with covetous eyes on the wealth of this wonderful valley. They have at different times sent great fleets and armies with horsemen and cannon to fight against your fathers, but not being favored by the gods they were not able to accomplish their purpose. What they were not able to carry through by force they now seek to attain through trickery, and in order that surer preparations may be made, desire detailed knowledge of the state of the kingdom.

"We, your humble counselors, learn with sorrow that one who has done great works for your Majesty, has become the agent of these secret plotters for your overthrow. Under guise of requirements for materials for making bricks for the bridge over the Dikko, in addition to the lime and sand and such other materials, he has demanded that one duck egg and one chicken egg be provided by each family in the realm. Behold his perfidy! He seeks to learn the exact number of your subjects. See

the defilement of his salt! He has been honored and enriched by your Majesty, and this is your reward! Away with the spy of the Bengalis! Seeing his debasement and the depth of his depravity we feel that for the safety of your own divine person and for the preservation of the kingdom, this enemy of men and of the holy gods should be put to death!"

Other speeches in the same vein showed to the Rajah that the jealousy of the nobles could be appeased only by the death of Ganesyam. Their power was so great that he could not afford to oppose them too openly. The many public works had not only cost large sums in gold and silver, but thousands of men had died of fevers and other diseases during their construction. Knowing that the nobles could throw great difficulties in the way, even though he knew that their accusations were false, he felt compelled to appear at least to yield to their demand. So he said:

"My honored counselors, I appreciate your love for my person and your desire for the honor of my great kingdom in Assam. You well know the power, glory, and wealth of this land stretching from beyond Gauhati in Kamrupia to the borders of Cheen and Thibet. Our hated enemy the Bengali Raj has long coveted our elephants, our beautiful virgins, and all the incalculable wealth of our realm; and now you reveal a further attempt on his part to obtain them. It is well. Your suggestion shall be followed. I give you leave to rise."

After the members of the Council had departed the Rajah sat for a long time in deep thought. Seemingly his hands were tied and there was no way to save his friend—yet, perhaps the new gods of the Brahmins could work some magic! "Who knows?"

Being summoned by the Rajah, Ganesyam came into the royal presence. He had learned of the intrigue and already knew of the decision; but his belief in fatalism—in "that which is written on the forehead is the will of the gods who cannot be thwarted"—gave to him a philosophy which at least dulled his apprehensions. If it had been decreed, so it would be, therefore why worry? Receiving permission, he sat down. After a time, the Rajah broke the silence and said:

"Ganesyam, you have done great works for me and my heart has also gone out to you. I have a question to ask, pray answer me plainly: If a friend of yours were to be sent on a journey how would you set his feet on the way?"

Understanding full well the purport of the question he answered:

"Your Majesty, my slaves and servants would prepare for him as royal a feast as my humble means would permit."

"So shall it be," said the Rajah. "Depart to your house, and I will issue the order that the most royal of feasts be set before you. Depart in peace."

At the royal command a most elaborate meal was carried from the royal kitchens to the house of Ganesyam. At the time of his evening repast, viands, rich and tasty and in profusion sufficient for a host were set before him. Guards were stationed outside the walls and the fifty locks on the many doors were sealed, and the time for the execution of the decree arrived.

During the night the Rajah could not sleep. Walking back and forth in his bedchamber he would look out of the window toward the house of his friend. In the morning just after the cockcrow he sent privately to

inquire as to the outcome. The servant returned and reported:

"Sire, I found the guards on duty about the house of Ganesyam. The fifty locks were faithfully sealed, but there is no trace of the architect. A hole is pierced through the thatch of the roof of the rest-house near the inside wall—but we can tell nothing—Your Majesty's decree has been executed."

Wondrous, massive temples, remnants of beautiful palaces, broad roads, and sparkling artificial lakes remain as the visible legacy of Rajah Rudra Singh and his son Sib Singh, to delight and astonish those who follow them in Assam, but—and the fact is very interesting—the harmony and similarity of construction in them all seem to point to the hand of one architect, possibly his school, but, in the words which are constantly in the mouths of the people, "Who knows?" It is not impossible that Ganesyam was secretly protected and that his mind continued to inspire the buildings done after he was supposed to have been slain.

When the Government and the missionaries found that Jaipur was not at all satisfactory as a headquarters station, they moved to Sibsagar and built their houses on or near the great tank—the artificial lake which is just about two miles around the top of its embankment—which had been built across the Dikko from the capital city of Rangpur. It had been named Sibsagar, the Sea of Siva. Year after year it still continues full of water but there are no springs to feed it and yet the level of the surface is from fifteen to eighteen feet above the surrounding lands! When it is realized that almost one hundred inches of water falls in rain each year this phenomenon is easy to understand.

Many stories and traditions are current in regard to this great engineering feat. It is astonishing how the men of that time made their surveys without dependable instruments, and their calculations, which worked, by mere "rule of thumb." It is said that this tank was built in a single night! This is manifestly impossible, for not enough men could be crowded about the area to move the amount of earth that was dug and carried in small baskets. The meaning of the tradition is, in all probability, that the work was done in such a short time that all were astonished. Most likely it was completed in one dry season in order to avoid the filling up of a partly dug area and thus adding greatly to the work to be done if it were permitted to wait over to a second season. Another very interesting fact about the Sibsagar tank is that the Rajah—and *Rajah* means "king"—at that time was a Rani—and *Rani* means "queen"! Yet it is true, for during this period the king was in reality a queen—in fact a succession of three of them! While this seems to be a paradox the explanation is after all quite simple and interesting.

Rajah Sib Singh was an Ahom. His tribe, who were Shans from upper Burmah, had invaded the valley and, in the course of time, had obtained control over it from Sadiya down into what is now Bengal. While it is not certain, yet it is probable that the name of this people gave to the land the name of Assam. *Shom* easily became *Ahom,* and that is the correct pronunciation of the name of the land by the people themselves to this day. The Ahoms were animists when they came into the valley. Their gods were demons. But as the Aryan Brahmins, who were Hindu priests from the western lands of Bengal and other parts of India, obtained great influence over the

ruling families, through them a majority of the people became Hinduized. All were very superstitious. Sib Singh was especially so. If a screech-owl would roost on the roof of the palace he would immediately bolt out of it in order to escape the bad luck implied! Taking advantage of this trait the Brahmins kept him entirely under their power. We are told that in the year 1772 they conducted a special ceremony, a *pujah,* to learn the will of the gods. When it was completed they came before him, and saluting, said:

"To your Majesty be peace. Sir, in our searching out the mind of the infallible gods, with the help of the inerrant Scriptures whose words and teachings know no shadow of variation from the will of the great Brahma, we learn that it is decreed that your illustrious rule will shortly terminate. We can understand nothing further from the revelation vouchsafed, but report with sorrow and great reluctance the thing which the infallible gods reveal."

When the priests had left the palace the Rajah sat long, much troubled in his mind.

"I have it!" he finally exclaimed. "Phuleswari, the Queen, shall become Rajah! I will give the name, the title, the royal umbrella, and all that pertains to the office to her. The priests shall by special ceremonies and *pujahs* cause the gods to know that my rule has come to an end! Aha! I, the Rajah, will outwit the gods!"

While it may be that he did delude the gods, the Brahmins were not deceived. They did not lose by the change. It was actually done as the Rajah had decided; the Rani, Phuleswari, and following her death, two successive wives of Sib Singh became "Rajah"—and for thirty years he ruled—yet the gods did not know it! Thus

it had come to pass that the great tank, Siva's Sea, was in theory at least, constructed by a female king!

During the years which have passed since then, the country has been devastated time and again. It has been almost depopulated and has once more filled up with towns and villages until now there is a dearth of land for those who desire to farm. Yet it occurred within this present year that more than ten thousand slaves have been freed among the hills of upper Burmah, and these were the descendants of Assamese carried off by the Burmese during the years just preceding the British occupation of Assam. The whole land has again become prosperous.

The lower section of the valley where Nathan Brown passed places which were howling jungles swarming with deer, tigers, bears, buffaloes, and even rhinoceroses, is now teeming with people and produces, among other things, enormous quantities of the best jute grown anywhere in the world.

The upper part of Assam has been made wealthy by the tea industry in particular. China once had the monopoly of this trade, but in 1823 Robert Bruce discovered the tea plant growing wild in the valley; and from that time there has been such progress that Assam has become one of the greatest tea-producing countries of the world. During the forty years which followed the discovery of the plant in upper India a wild orgy of speculation in tea shares almost ruined the hopes of the new industry. But following this after the inevitable reaction, it has become one of the most stable and best paying propositions on the market. Tea shares now bring the fine return of from ten per cent. to one hundred per cent. yearly on the capital invested.

In the present Sibsagar town there is one section called

Chinapatti. Here is where the early Chinese tea-makers, who were imported to teach the process of manufacture to local labor, settled down. They have married among the local races and now form the larger part of the Sibsagar Christian church.

In addition to these Chinese the industry has brought hundreds of thousands of immigrants from different parts of India. It has helped to fill up the tens of thousands of square miles of the waste lands with people. These coolies through their labor on the gardens and in the enormous factories which are scattered all over the valley and produce millions of pounds of tea yearly, are helping make the land prosperous and wealthy. But even with the great increase in the population through this immigration there are immense vacant areas held by the Government in reserves which before the times of the Burmese were thickly populated. In addition to these lands are the sparsely populated, jungle-covered Naga Hills not far away as the crow flies, where there are vast areas that could be cultivated if scientific methods were adopted.

Just why a crow's flight should be chosen to indicate a straight line is hard to stay. Any one who has observed, knows that this bird will wander all over the land in search of food or fun. Even when a flock is going to roost in the evening they will not hesitate to increase the distance if there is a chance to play tricks on each other, and these by no means tend to keep the line of flight straight!

A Government officer had an appropriate answer when the expression was used in an official letter. It was in reality a reprimand from the Comptroller of the Treasury, whose duty it was to check up on bills submitted to the Treasury for traveling allowances, among other things. The letter written by this dignitary was as follows:

SIR:

In your bill for T. A. dated ....., I have the honour to note that you enter the distance from Rampur to Kossiya as being twenty miles, and you request the allowance for that distance.

Having checked this on the map of the last Survey I find that as the crow flies this distance is but nineteen and seven-eight miles. Will you kindly explain the discrepancy.

I have the honour to be
Your most obedient servant,

Signed .....
Comptroller.

The answer which was sent by return post was as follows:

SIR:

In reply to your valued letter dated ....., I have the honour to state that I do not ride a crow.

I have the honour to be
Your most obedient servant,

Signed .....

The immense jungle areas which still exist are the breeding-places of all kinds of wild animals. The hill peoples cultivate by burning over a field and then planting it for several years, after which it is again allowed to grow up in jungle for a period of years, and even though the valley of the Brahmaputra is comparatively well occupied, yet these great reservoirs of elephants, tigers, deer, pigs, and all the other varied fauna of this semitropical land keep the plains area supplied with thrills, at the very least. While it is true of them, as it was of the Government officer, that they do not ride crows to get about, yet a matter of fifteen or twenty miles is a very easy night's journey for a tiger or an elephant. As the

valley averages about forty miles in width, and as there is a range of hills on each side it is probable that the land will never be entirely free from such visitors. This is the reason that tigers turn up in towns quite frequently. In addition to the forests and jungle areas being near, the method of farming and the living conditions of the plains people provide refuges for them in and about the towns even. The farmers live in villages and go out from these to their small holdings during the day. They cannot have their fruit trees, bamboos, or fruit gardens away from their houses because they are too poor to build fences around their fields to protect them from the cattle and goats which eat down almost everything that is green. In the rice-planting and harvest season the boys and old men are put on as herdsmen to protect the crops, but for the rest of the year the animals roam at will.

For these reasons each house in the village has its own little garden or orchard, depending on the status of the householder, close up to and around his dwelling. Fences of a kind protect these, but the result is that in and about all villages are large plots that are half jungle, containing trees, bamboos, and much smaller growth. Tigers wandering over the country find refuge in these groves during the day and thus often travel farther and farther away from their home haunts.

A short time ago the Padri was getting the car ready to go on tour when a man carrying a heavy club rushed up crying:

"Sir! Sir! A tiger is in the town near the hospital! It has mauled three men already! Do come!"

"Right-o," he answered, "I'll get the rifle."

Taking his Winchester and a pocket full of cartridges he went with the man. Not a quarter of a mile from the

tank on which the bungalow stands, for the bungalow stands on the bank of the tank which Rajah Sib Singh had built, he found great crowds of people all intensely excited. They had spears, clubs, knives, and there were twenty shotguns new and old, anything in fact that would serve as a weapon. This garden area which was almost like a jungle was in the very heart of the town of Sibsagar. It was fully twenty acres in extent and surrounded on all sides by the houses of the people. It made excellent cover for the tiger that had wandered into it during the night. Several people had seen it in the moonlight, and others had heard it roar, but its tracks gave it away in the morning. When it was found to have hid in this garden area the people gathered to the number of several thousand. The Padri found crowds around the outside edge of the jungle peering in to try to see the tiger. Dozens—and among these the ubiquitous small boy—were up in the trees trying to locate the big cat, but black stripes on a dark yellow background, lying flat on the ground which was shaded by limbs of trees, leaves, and bushes, and in addition to this spotted by great blobs of yellow gold sunshine—such a combination makes a perfect blend that deceives any but the sharpest eye. Any smallest movement would have been seen, but a cornered, frightened tiger does not move, except perhaps the tip of his tail, but it is this telltale record of his every emotion that very often gives him away. The noise of the calling and talking on all sides annoyed this tiger so much that he charged again, trying to climb up a clump of bamboo in which a couple of boys were perched. The Padri fired at him, but the stems were too dense and the bullet was turned aside. With a grunting roar he went back again into the thicket where he had been hiding, and a few minutes later an

Indian gentleman who was up in a near-by tree saw him and with one ball from a shotgun ended his depredations. He was a fine, fat beast and measured almost nine feet in length. While this is not large for a tiger, yet it would mean sure death should he attack an unarmed man.

The town of Sibsagar has seen many similar occurrences. When Fox the missionary was living there he happened to hear the crows cawing and making such an uproar that he looked out from his bungalow over the water of the tank. He saw that the object of their annoyance was something swimming in the tank a little beyond the church which was on the side opposite the house. People were looking on, from a respectable distance—a very respectable distance! Several Indian policeman came up and fired their rifles at the animal; and Fox, realizing that it was a tiger, got his rifle and went out to the edge of the water just in front of the bungalow and waited there, for it was swimming directly toward him.

Mrs. Fox took the children inside the house and closed all the doors. Opening one of them a little, she called out:

"Earl, dear, do come in. You may get hurt."

But not a bit of it! Waiting till the tiger was but a few feet from the bank, he fired, and fortunately for him, killed it with the first shot.

"Why in creation did you wait till it was so close?" a friend asked him.

"Well," he answered laconically, "I didn't want to lose the skin. If I had shot it way out in the water it would have sunk."

Of course such happenings are not every-day occurrences, but this land of Rajah Sib Singh is still the wild northeast frontier of the British possessions in India. From the hunting-grounds of the old Kamptis near Sadiya

to the entrance to the valley in the Goalpara district, a distance of nearly six hundred miles, Assam has been the home of sport, of the hunting of big game, both human and animal, from time immemorial; and it promises to run true to tradition.

III

THE GOALPARA GATEWAY

Free-lance wanderers have opened up many of the unknown areas of the world. Columbus, Lawrence the Uncrowned King of Arabia, Livingstone of Africa, Bill, Godwin, Lister and Mill in the time of Rudra Singh who was father to Rajah Sib Singh—all these are of the host of wandering stars who have cast the first light on the trail of glory which succeeding generations have emblazoned with the glare of the fierce light of history. But only too often, like the momentary flash of the meteor, little concerning them remains to human knowledge save the path which the glow of their passing revealed. Occasionally a few pages of history record one or two deeds out of a lifetime, or it may be that like the four nameless graves of unknown white men in a grass-grown plot near Jogi Ghopa hill near Goalpara the gateway to Assam, naught remains save such mute witnesses to tell of the heroes who opened the closed doors of history. This is especially true of Assam. The heat and humidity of the climate destroy both man and his works.

For ages the Brahmaputra and Monass rivers have scoured at the great rock which is called Jogi Ghopa. Two miles across the stream stands another great hill, and five miles up is Goalpara. Being easily fortified, Jogi Ghopa has been the scene of many bloody battles both on water and on the land. It was the strong fort protecting the lower border of Sib Singh's land, and during all the

history of the great kingdoms in Assam it was the first place of importance that invading armies had to take before the valley was open to their armies. The Mohammedans in the seventeenth century, in the course of their many invasions from Bengal, found it a very hard nut to crack.

On a beautiful day in January, 1636, the sweet, heart-searching, plaintive cry of the *muzzein* calling the faithful to prayer, floated over the broad Brahmaputra:

La illaha illa laha,
La illaha illa laha,
Mohammed Rosul illaha.

A great fleet of boats was making its way up the river. It was the expedition under Mir Jainuddin, brother of the Nawab of Dacca in Bengal, which had been sent to invade Assam and to recapture the wealthy province. The Nawab was the ruler of the territory held by the Mohammedans in the East, and the loss of both revenue and honor through the defeat of his armies a few years before, made him very anxious for the success of this venture.

Mir Jainuddin sat under the lovely silk-and-gold embroidered canopy in his richly appointed boat. Its cabin, with the Arabian carpets, beautiful filigree brass hanging-lamps and luxurious divans with rich pillows gave no hint of the warlike purpose of the thousand sloops and boats whose sails were as clouds floating on the river. On the cushioned seats with their brightly colored pillows on which to lean, sat the generals who were in command of the various parts of the army and fleet. Pran Narayan, the Hindu Rajah of Kooch Bihar, an ally, also sat with them. With a pleased smile Mir Jainuddin looked about over the council and said:

"Allah be praised! The wind has been strong today, and we have covered the entire distance from Dhubri. That is Jogi Ghopa just in sight. Ah! The call to prayer."

A servant had prepared the water for the ablutions prescribed for the faithful Mohammedan. Rising from the divan he proceeded to bathe his face, hands and forearms, feet and ankles according to the rules laid down by the Prophet. Taking his place back of the *Mullah* who was his special priest, he followed each motion, each bow and prostration; and it was all accompanied by the whisper of the wind in the sails and the song of the water rippling from the prow of the boat as it sped up the stream; for even a council of state must be interrupted to permit the devout Mohammedan to say any one of his five prescribed daily *namazes,* which include both worship and prayer. The threatened penalty of twenty thousand years in hell for each failure to observe properly even one of them may have something to do with the evident zeal of many of the worshipers.

Having completed the *namaz* and seated himself, the council again took up its business. Addressing the Commander of the Fleet, he said:

"Serang Sahib, have the fleet anchor for the night."

When he had salaamed and gone out to have the signal passed to all the boats, Rajah Pran Narayan arose and addressed the council as follows:

"Honored Khan Sahib! By the favor of the gods you are the commander of this great expedition against the enemies of His Royal Highness, Auranzeb the Mighty, in whose name we go to victory and wealth. Knowing well the Ahom people, with whom my kingdom has battled for years, and realizing that they are both brave and able,

may I be permitted to suggest that a careful watch be set tonight and that all preparations be made to resist an attack after it is dark.

"The winds are blowing up clouds of sand from the banks of the river, but through the haze as I look through the window up the stream, I see the assembled multitude of their boats. The current being in their favor there is danger of them dropping down quietly and making a night attack. That is a favorite trick of theirs."

"Friend Pran Narayan," said the Commander with a smile, "I fear that you have remembered the ill-fortune which overtook your own army. We are in the hand of Allah. Our fleet is strong. The twelve thousand horse and twenty thousand footmen are but a few hours back, and the Ahoms will be too worried about them to think of moving in the night. And then, who in all time has ever heard of a fleet starting out to attack a strong enemy in the dark? Have no fear. Great is Allah!"

This was the night following the full of the moon, when until almost the end of the first watch, the land lay under a great darkness. Still, every one felt secure. From the Commander to the common sailor they thought and boasted: "Have we not the greatest fleet the world has ever seen? Are not the new cannon the greatest ever mounted on ships? And is not the honorable Deutsch Sahib in charge of them? What is there to fear?"

The great fleet lay along both banks of the river. The wind had dropped with the setting of the sun, and the stars were brilliant in the deep, jet black of the sky. Fires and lights were twinkling on the sands and in the boats themselves, and the odor of curry spices and the scent of the sweet cooked rice rose on the air, for the evening meal was preparing. Arms, oars, and sails were all

stowed away, for no one dreamed of any need for them till the morning.

About the middle of the first watch a sentinel heard a sound as though an oar rubbed in the lock. Looking out over the river he saw swarms of what seemed to be boats, moving swiftly toward the fleet from up the stream.

"Who are you?" he challenged. "Answer, or I fire!"

Taking up his matchlock he primed the firing-pan and pointed it in the direction of the shadowy boats out in the stream, but before he could pull the trigger, a blow from a pole wielded by a sturdy Ahom in a small boat that had floated up under the shadow of the prow on which he stood, knocked him into the water. His gun went off harmlessly.

"Allah!" he shouted. "The *kaffirs* [barbarians]!"

Instantly there was great confusion. Shouting, calls, and orders rent the air. The cry was taken up by the boats farther down the stream; flares blazed up, and the light from a dozen burning ships, which had been fired by the Ahoms, lighted up a scene of the utmost disorder. The cannon on the larger Ahom ships now came into action, guns roared, and the vessels of Mir Jainuddin which had been first attacked, resounded with shouts and blows. The decks ran red with blood as ship after ship fell into the hands of the swarming enemy. By this time the moon was rising over the hills of the Bhutias, and the added light revealed the condition of the fleet farthest up the river to those who were down the stream. The thousand boats and sloops extended several miles along the banks, and fortunately for them all, the larger ships carrying the twenty-foot long cannon, had anchored lowest down as they traveled more slowly than the lighter boats.

The Deutsch Sahib (one of the many white adventurers

who took service under the great rulers in that day) immediately ordered his men to stand by, and in a very short time his great ships, each pulled by six or seven rowed boats, were advancing against the larger vessels of the Ahoms which were just coming into action.

When the great cannon were fired over the lower small boats, the sound echoed over the water like thunder. The great balls, the like of which had never been seen in Assam, crashed through two or three hulls at once. Seeing this great fleet advancing up the river, spouting destruction as it came, the Ahoms turned and made off in confusion; and the small, fast chaser boats of the Mohammedans, each having fifty oarsmen, worried them as they sped away. But they did not go far, for night fighting was not popular in those days. Returning with shouts of "Allah! Allah!" the fleet again settled down for the night, but a better watch was set, and everything was put into shape to ward off another attack; but the Ahoms had had sufficient for this time.

Many such battles involving thousands of boats, tens of thousands of wild horsemen, often with hundreds of elephants also, have taken place in and about Jogi Ghopa in sight of the beautiful Goalpara hill just five miles up the Brahmaputra. When the Padri and the Memsahib first saw it as they came up the river in one of the steamers that have taken the place of the snail-slow boats of old, it stood out as a beautiful green gem set in the circlet of the great river. The hill is only two miles around the base and about three hundred feet high, but when in the course of time the Mohammedans had been driven out of Assam and the British took the land from the diabolical Burmese who were ravaging it early in the nineteenth century, it became the headquarters of the Goalpara District. This

division of the valley is the one at the beginning of the plains between the two ranges of hills which run parallel to the course of the Brahmaputra. The hill was occupied by bungalows for the European officers. There were beautiful compounds and gardens and the court-house, jail, and other public buildings made the place a charming location for white folks. But the surrounding country has always had great jungles of grass and trees full of the largest wild animals, and of uncounted billions of mosquitoes, leeches, butterflies, and insects of innumerable kinds.

In this, the lower part of the valley, the level, sandy portions of the land are covered for miles back from the river in many places, with enormous grass jungle. The height of this *kagra,* or elephant-grass, is almost beyond belief. Looking across from the Goalpara hilltop, the great plain looks like a beautiful tennis-court with the grass cut level ready for play.

One day the Padri had a startling proof of the size of this grass. He was across the river among it with a party of hunters looking for tiger. The party was mounted on elephants, and as there was one place where he lost sight of the other elephants, which were but a short distance away, he stood up on the seat of the *howdah* to try to see them across the tops of the grass.

Now an elephant used for *howdah* work is usually a large beast that is not only strong but is also staunch when it comes to facing a tiger. The one the Padri was on was just an inch or two less than ten feet in height. On his back was a *gadhi,* a large, light pad a foot thick; on top of this was the *howdah* with its seat a foot and a half above the *gadhi.* The Padri stood on top of the seat and thus added another five and a half feet to his

range of vision. Add it up: Elephant, ten feet; seat, one and a half; *gadhi*, one, and his eyes five and a half feet more—a total of eighteen feet. And the grass still towered so high above him that he could not see the other elephants! Some grass! It was an amazing illustration of the profligacy of nature in this exceedingly fertile valley. Jungle grows with unbelievable rapidity in its semitropical climate. This is the reason that the wandering tribes have from time to time been attracted into it, and it is also the reason that there are practically no ruins of any kind remaining to tell the story of their occupation. The rainfall is heavy, the heat in the summer is intense, and damp, mold, and vegetation, with the aid of many earthquakes, all conspire against man and his puny works.

Excepting for the ruins of three palaces, some massive temples, a few beautiful artificial lakes, and some disintegrating earthworks, nothing remains to tell of the herculean labors of millions of men who toiled and died erecting enchanting palaces and temples, amassing fortunes in gold and silver, herds of elephants, and fleets of thousands of boats—all that went to satisfy the pleasure or ambition of kings and nobles—and nothing but a few small ruins remains to tell all the story!

And also, with the exception of some copper plates and a very few books written on palm-leaves, and recording but an infinitesimal portion of the doings of the Ahoms in Assam for less than five hundred years, there is no real history of the nations and kingdoms which have existed in this valley for hundreds of ages. In the years that have passed the jungles were heavier than they are now, and communication was very much more difficult. Dangerous wild animals and snakes were just as prolific, and because of the lack of modern arms were altogether

impossible to control. The courage of the men of old in facing disease and death with practically no medicines, speaking in the modern sense, causes those of us who live in these days to marvel at their courage and wonder how armies ever lived to travel the thousands of miles that they did cover, facing constantly death from men and snakes and beasts as well as from the pestilence that stalked in the night. Even now, with quinine, serums, medicines of all kinds; and with modern, high-powered rifles for defense, the dangers from these same sources are by no means imaginary. The sense of eternal vigilance is the price of a reasonable measure of safety; and even with this sense well developed many exciting moments are experienced—as Mofiz proved.

Mofiz was a Mohammedan living in Goalpara town. He was employed by the Padri as a cook. For years he had served Europeans and knew their ways well, in addition to being a fairly good chef. His skin was wrinkled, and part of his teeth had fallen out on account of the lime he used with the betel-leaf which he chewed. But he was a jewel—a little shopworn perhaps—but a jewel nevertheless!

"How old are you, Bawarchi [cook]?" asked the Padri.

"I cannot tell, Sir," he answered, "but I was a young man in the time of Campbell Sahib, and that is twenty-five years ago. The same one-tusker elephant that was about here in the jungle last night was giving trouble to the farmers by destroying their crops then.

"Campbell Sahib was the Government officer and went out to shoot it one day. He was able to get quite close, for it was not afraid, before he fired. It fell down with a thud that shook the ground, and thinking that it was dead he did not shoot again—and it got up and ran away!

It is the same elephant that I saw then, and as I was a young man and married at that time, I am an old man now."

"You seem to admire Campbell Sahib, Mofiz," said the Padri.

"I do indeed, Sir," answered the old man. "I owe my life to him. One evening in a camp-house I was serving his dinner. The hut was small, built of bamboo and thatch, and as I was passing behind his chair and quite close to the wall to serve the vegetables, something hooked into the back of my white coat. I stood still and said, 'Sir, something has caught my coat.'

"Looking up he said quietly, 'Stand still. Don't move.'

"He went and got his sword, and striking carefully, cut off the head of the cobra that had struck at me. Its fangs were fast in my coat!"

An experience somewhat similar happened to the Padri himself. He had been out to play tennis in the cool of the evening. The day had been hot and the air was sultry. Returning home after dark he walked through the gate into the compound and was not able to see the path clearly, but as he was wearing rubber-soled shoes his steps made so little noise that the Memsahib did not hear him in time to send out a light as was the custom.

"Is that you, dear?" she called from the nursery, when he had entered the verandah. "I was hoping that you would come soon."

"Why? Is there anything wrong?"

"Oh," she answered, "only that old cat, the black one, is a nuisance! It got in again and stole the fish we had for dinner!"

"All right. I'll have an interview with that gentleman!"

Getting the shotgun, he loaded it with No. 4-shot cartridges, and going out, with a servant following him carrying a lamp, he saw the eyes of the cat shining as it sat under a little flower arbor. He fired, but the cartridge being damp the shot had no force, and the cat ran.

"Come on," he said to the servant, "Let's see if we can get another shot." Starting quickly ahead along the path, in his anxiety he was not careful. He had not taken a dozen steps when he put his foot down on what felt like a bit of rubber hose! Telling the Memsahib afterward, he said:

"As I was still wearing the tennis-shoes, I made little noise, and the soles being thin I felt the thing I stepped on wiggle! Somehow I knew it was a snake and began to do a wild-up-and-down and crosswise dance away from the spot! It was but a few seconds till it got away into the grass. The servant came up just then; the lamp was shaking with the trembling of his hands and his face was a scared green.

"'Sir,' he said, 'that was a cobra, and I saw it strike at you twice! Allah saved you!'"

Few can live for years in India without personal experiences of some kind, involving snakes or wild animals, and those who are in any way keen, particularly when living and traveling in such parts of it as Assam, find plenty of opportunity to see and shoot game of many kinds, for it is still abundant. The natural aspiration of every hunter is to get his tiger, but without elephants this is often a most difficult and dangerous undertaking. Wealthy Indians keep herds of these great animals, but only the favored few have the privilege to be guests of those who are wealthy enough to have the paraphernalia for luxury *shikar* (hunting).

Etzemo the hostler who cared for the Padri's pony while they were living at Goalpara, was down the hill one day cutting grass. He saw a long procession of bullock-carts drive to the bank of the river and begin to unload tents, *howdahs,* and all kinds of elaborate camp equipment. When he had collected enough grass to feed the pony for the day he hurried with it up the hill, and going to the Padri said:

"Sir, the Maharajah of Mymensing is coming to Goalpara."

"How do you know?"

"Oh, his camp is down there. Come here, and you can see the tents being put up."

Going to the edge of the hilltop they could see the activity in the camp below.

"I asked who they were," continued Etzemo, "where they came from, whose camp it is, and what they are going to do," which was the height of Oriental courtesy; if such interest is not shown a visitor feels slighted!

"They told me that the Maharajah has come on one of his shoots. He has a hundred and twenty-five bullock-carts; one part of them have brought in this camp. He has two outfits and is camping in the other set of tents now, but will be here in a few days. He has forty-nine elephants with him, but one was born the other day, and that makes fifty. He is going to hunt buffaloes and tigers about here," eagerly expounded Etzemo.

"Whew! Take a breath, man!" smiled the Padri. "You surely did get the whole story. But it is well. When he comes I will go to see him as I am the only white man here."

It happened that the Civil Surgeon, Major Gidney, came to Goalpara that same day. He was a European

with the best of English medical training and degrees. Such doctors as he are located in many of the districts in British India. They are in charge of the Government hospitals and dispensaries which are scattered all over the land. Gidney had come on duty, to do his usual inspection and also to perform eye operations on nearly a hundred patients who had gathered awaiting his coming. Being a friend of the Padri, they went together to call on the Maharajah when he arrived several days later.

They found Surja Kanta to be a very pleasant fellow. He was a keen sportsman and an excellent shot. His home and landed property were in the Mymensing District in Bengal. In reality he was not a rajah, nor a maharajah, which means "great king" by birth, he was merely a wealthy land-owner who had been generous in his public benefactions, and the Government had given the title as a matter of honor. It would not be inherited by his son. As both Gidney and the Padri were keen hunters and as they were thoroughly acquainted with all the country about, he invited them to be his guests for the fortnight's shoot. Such an opportunity for sport with an old campaigner having such complete equipment happens but seldom in a lifetime, and both of his callers were delighted.

The Padri knew the District best. He had been in and out of the villages for years in the course of his preaching and advised that a place called Chapar be made the center for the shoot. He knew where there were a half dozen tigers within a radius of five miles of the village.

For a local guide and as a kind of a receptacle for information, Abdul, who lived near the place, was engaged. He was a dark, heavy-set, rather tough-looking Mohammedan, a man entirely without fear; the wild border

provinces breed many men who are brave, but Abdul did not seem to know there was fear complex. Using an old, muzzle-loading shotgun which had but a single barrel (called in ordinary parlance a "gas-pipe gun") he would go alone into the thickest jungle and sit and watch paths that were used by tigers till one would come along, and then he would shoot it for the skin in order to obtain the Government reward!

"One evening," he said, "I went into the high-grass jungle down toward the river where I knew there was a very large tiger living. I sat down a few yards from the path and waited for it to come. Suddenly I woke up and found to my surprise that it was morning! I had gone to sleep and had slept the entire night! I went and looked at the path, and there were the tracks of the tiger. He had gone back and forth, and I sat there and did not know it. I was surely disgusted for I lost the fifty rupees reward. Oh, well, it was *kismet* [fate]!"

While Abdul finally ended up in jail for life for shooting a man who stole one of his several wives, he proved to be very useful beforehand.

The Maharajah's second camp was sent across the river and on to Chapar to be set up before the party moved from the Goalpara location. Swimming the elephants is always an interesting process and attracts a crowd to watch the show. On one occasion when several elephants were needed across the Brahmaputra at Dhubri, where it is about five miles wide, one of the two which were available was the mother of a young one but two years old. John Bhadur was his name, and he stood about four feet high. He was one of the comparatively few elephants born in captivity, but he was sturdy and rather inclined to be wicked. The *mahouts* had teased him till he was

very disobedient at times. When the older elephants started into the water he balked and squalled and trumpeted; and just like a naughty little child, lay down on the sand and squealed in rage. Elephants are very fond of their young, and neither of the two old ones would go without him, and they coaxed and called him for all the world like two old women fussing over a grandchild. Finally he made up his mind to go, and they took him between them and fondled him with their trunks, making little love sounds as they started to swim across. Bobbing up and down in long arcs, part of the time just the tips of their trunks showing above the surface of the water, even the *mahouts* who were standing up on their backs submerged to the waist, they all went steadily across the river. John Bhadur was kept between them and helped along every time he would even grunt.

As the Maharajah had camped for years and knew how to be comfortable, to say nothing of having luxury in tents, he had sent six of his fastest travelers with orders to wait at the landing-place at Jogi Ghopa to take the party to the next camp. In his day he had shot over two hundred tigers, a number of rhinoceroses and smaller game almost without number, he had spent from two to four months in camp nearly every cold season and knew every move of the game. The slower, heavier elephants went on ahead and as with everything else, were waiting at the camp the afternoon when he, with his guests, arrived. Tea was also ready, and after a short rest Abdul the *shikari,* the head *mahout,* and many people from the surrounding country came before him to report the news that they had in regard to game. Rewards had been offered for information as to the location of tigers—provided of course that the animals should be seen when the ground

would be beaten over—and with much seemingly correct information there was promise of a very successful camp.

By this time the sun had gone down and servants informed each guest that his bath was ready. They found the portable tubs all prepared in the bathroom sections of each large tent. After a bath and change all gathered again in the large dining-tent for a "buck" before dinner (a "buck" being a "talkee-talkee").

"A peg, Padri?" asked the Maharajah. "Peg" meaning highball.

"No, thank you. T. T., you know," answered he.

"Lemonade, ginger, soda, what is your tipple?" he hospitably insisted.

"Oh, just a lemonade. Many thanks."

Of the others some took stronger waters, but it was pleasant to sit sipping a cool drink after the heat of the day, for it was the month of May.

"Have a cigarette, Padri," said the Maharajah holding his case toward him.

"Many thanks indeed. I don't smoke," he answered smiling.

"What! Don't drink! Don't smoke! What joy do you get out of life anyway?" he teased.

"Oh, just a clear conscience and a good lemonade," answered the Padri.

The dinner that was served by smart servants wearing spick-and-span white uniforms was as good as would have been found in many a first-class hotel. Everything from soup, fish, and so on through a six-course dinner followed by sweets and coffee, gave little impression of roughing it in camp!

In the morning every one slept late. The early cup of tea was served before each guest arose. Breakfast came

in due time, and it seemed to the guests that the day was being rather wasted. But about ten o'clock the riding elephants were brought, and the start made for the day's location. The slower, heavier animals had been sent ahead, but the fast ones had waited. There were six of these, and as they could walk from five to six miles an hour, compared with the three or four of the others there was a large margin of difference, and the wise Maharajah sat in comfort for the extra hour! When he did reach the shooting-ground everything was in exact readiness to begin the day's business. Otherwise it would have been necessary to go and sit about in the sun until the slow pachyderms would roll up. None of the lessons of years in camp had been overlooked!

The place chosen for the day's shoot was about five miles from Chapar. When the Maharajah and his guests arrived all the other elephants were there, and everything was in order. The *howdahs* were in place, and each one had in it a battery of four rifles and an abundance of ammunition. Even the lunch elephant, with large baskets of eatables and drinkables, was standing by. Inspecting the four *howdahs* and seeing that all the other elephants were in good condition and that the *mahouts* carried spears in addition to their usual iron goads, for use in emergencies, Surja Kanta approved the arrangements, so it was a matter of but fifteen minutes till all were in line with the four men who were shooting, in their howdahs at intervals with the beating elephants between.

The local farmer who had reported that he had seen two tigers in that jungle was also along on one of the beating elephants. He pointed out the high grass bordering a narrow, crooked creek as the place where he had seen them "with my own eyes!" It was an ideal spot. The

grass was from eight to ten feet high and extended for about a half mile toward a large open field.

The Maharajah ordered all the elephants to be formed into a line just long enough to drive the entire jungle at one sweep. Gidney was requested to go to the opposite side of the grass to act as a stop in case the tigers should make a break that way. The other thirty elephants—not all had been brought as a number had to be left to bring in fodder—took up their stations and waited the signal. The Maharajah was in the center of the line; Eastman, a friend of his, was on the left, and the Padri was near the extreme right of the beat. There was no noise or confusion. It was essential that the game be not disturbed till the proper time. At a signal from Surja Kanta the drive began. No one shouted or called to his neighbor, not even talking was permitted, nothing was heard save the swish of the grass as the elephants quietly pushed their way through.

Suddenly a *mahout* near the Maharajah pointed, there was a movement of the grass, a little to the left was another as though some animal was walking away from the line. "*Bagh*" (tiger) said one of the men. Getting an indefinite glance at something just ahead of him the Maharajah fired. He signaled to the right of the line to advance faster. He fired again, and two separate channels were cut through the grass as two tigers charged straight toward the place where Gidney was waiting. He was seen to lift his double-barreled rifle, fire one shot to the right, swing around and immediately fire another to the left, look closely in the direction he had shot, and then hold up his hand signaling "Finished!"

At this all the *mahouts* began to shout, "Allah! Allah!" The line was rushed through the remaining portion of the

NINE-FOOT TIGER
Shot by the Padri in a Cowshed

Photo by courtesy of Messrs. John Smeel & Co.

MOOCHIES WAITING TO SKIN IT

jungle and there, within twenty yards of each other lay a beautiful tiger and his mate. They were sleek, fat animals of good size. It was a record bit of shooting to get two tigers with two immediately consecutive shots, a right and a left, not five seconds apart!

As the elephants were collected around the place so that every one could have a look, the odor of the tigers and the excitement of their drivers stirred them too, and they began to grumble in chorus. With such a large number of elephants it was like the rumble of an earthquake. It seemed as though they were trying to join the men in their shouts of "Jai! Jai!" (victory).

The next day the elephants were given a rest; but the morning following there was news of two other tigers some three or four miles in the opposite direction. This proved to be an entirely different proposition. There was less cultivation in that area. The *kagra* grass was so high that when the elephants went into it they were entirely hidden from view. The section where the two tigers had been seen was like a long tongue projecting from miles of unbroken jungle. When inside it was impossible to see to shoot anything, and there were tunnel-like paths all through under it along which game could travel.

The method followed this time was to place "stops" or "guns," i. e., *howdah* elephants each carrying a hunter with his arsenal, at places which seemed to be the natural outlets for game that might be driven from within the grass. The line was put into the thickest part of the tongue and right across it, a quarter of a mile from the tip, and driving toward the stops any animal hidden below would thus be brought out where it could be seen and shot.

Surja Kanta himself went in with the beating-line, Gidney covered the left, Eastman the middle, and the Padri

the right end of the point. Watching closely they could see the grass wave as the great beasts slowly advanced plowing it aside and pushing it down under their feet with their trunks. Only the disturbance that they made could be seen, the elephants were entirely hidden by the grass.

The line had advanced about half the distance from the place it had formed, coming in the direction of the stops, when there was a trumpeting of elephants and shouting of the men, *"Bagh! Bagh!"*—and a shot—but the line continued to advance slowly with no further diversion.

The three stops waited breathlessly. The day was hot and still, and not a breath of air was stirring to move a leaf. Their elephants would occasionally brush at a fly that was biting through their sensitive hides. The *mahouts* would gently urge them to be quiet. Every one watched the edge of the jungle intently. Eastman in the middle noticed the smaller grass in front of him move ever so slightly. There was no breeze to do it, some animal was creeping forward, very slowly, toward his elephant. It made not even the shadow of a sound, but when it was about twenty yards from him he saw a bit of gold-yellow color in the grass and fired—and there was a loud roar, and the tigress was away with a swift rush off to the right. Going in through the taller grass for a short distance she broke cover across the front of the Padri at marvelous speed—but on three legs. Eastman's shot had broken her right foreleg, and it is remarkable how fast a tiger can travel on three feet! Getting a glimpse of her as she came into the smaller grass at the edge of the jungle on his side the Padri took a running shot, got the shoulder, and finished the job.

By this time the line had worked out from the high *kagra*. The Maharajah came up and saw to measuring

the beast as she lay in order to have correct records, but he said:

"Let's get this over as soon as possible. Her mate is back in there, he broke back when I fired. Take the elephants out around, and put the line in again a little farther down. This time, you two gentlemen please take the same places, but you, Padri, please follow up along the outside edge as the line advances, so that he cannot break away to that big jungle across there. We could never stir him out of that."

His instructions were carried out, and the line again came along slowly, with the same astounding quietness, back over the same track. The Padri just outside the sharp edge of the jungle, stood in his *howdah* as his elephant advanced slowly, keeping a few yards ahead of the drive. Coming to a well-worn game trail—a regular tunnel under the grass, he said to the *mahout,* "Turn the elephant to face that." It was about forty yards to the entrance of the tunnel. The elephant stood stock still and everything about was breathless in the silent heat. To any animal that might have looked from the jungle Moti Lall would have appeared like a great, dust-gray hillock. Within the *kagra* all that could be heard was the "swish, swish" of the pushing feet and trunks of the elephants of the line as they gently forced their way through. A short distance from the end one of them rumbled; another took it up—it was evident that they had started the tiger again. Watching the path intently, the Padri waited with his double-barreled rifle cocked and poised. One second the path was empty—the next—and there stood a beautiful, enraged, snarling tiger with his long fangs uncovered as with a grunting roar he started to charge right at Moti Lall.

The Padri was using a new, hammerless .400 rifle. It was a delightful little weapon. He raised it quickly, drew a bead on the charging animal, and pulled the trigger—but it would not go off! The reason was that as it was a new rifle the springs were stiff and in "breaking" it when opening the breech to load it, it had not been snapped down with sufficient force to cock the firing mechanism. But, still following the animal with the sights, he changed his finger to the left trigger and pulled —by this time the tiger was within five or six feet of the elephant's trunk; fortunately the left barrel fired, and although the tiger was not hit the sound made him turn back into the grass. A great trumpeting and confusion arose among the beating elephants there, for he broke through the line, and it was necessary to reform it in order to get farther down into the jungle to keep him from getting away back into the miles of grass toward the river.

Again driving slowly and carefully the beat came on toward the end of the point. Nothing further had been seen of the tiger. This was not surprising, for there is not a more cunning beast than he in all the jungles of earth. The Padri was again following along the outside of the tall grass. He had come near to the place where he had stood when the tigress had been shot, and the line had but a short distance to come till it would emerge from the jungle. Looking closely at the smaller grass which was in front of him he saw it move. Watching even more carefully he located the tiger crawling slowly, belly to earth, just ready to charge a second time. He fired, and there was a great roar, and they saw the great brute leap back into the jungle. Its progress could be followed as with great leaps it plowed its way through the *kagra*. The power required to rush through such

grass which had stems as thick as corn stocks, showed the marvelous strength of the beast. It charged through on to the beating-line where the Maharajah fired, turning it back again toward the stops.

It was found out later that the elephant on which the tiger had leaped when it struck the line, had a very ugly gash. One claw only had gone in through the thick skin of the shoulder, but it had cut a slit six inches long, and so deep that a finger could scarcely reach to the bottom!

Surja Kanta brought the beating line on slowly toward the guns. They were still about a hundred yards inside the jungle while the three men on their *howdahs* outside waited breathlessly, watching with all concentration. Everything was still and quiet, when happening to glance toward Eastman, the Padri saw again the telltale movement in the smaller grass. For the fourth time within two hours that tiger was preparing to charge. Such persistent rage is very unusual.

Signaling to Eastman and pointing to the place, the Padri waited, ready to help if necessary. Eastman signed that he had spotted the movement. He was an old hunter, having many a skin to his credit. Every one waited, it seemed an hour though in reality it was less than three minutes. Slowly the brute came on till the grass became so thin that it could hide no longer, and, with a great, coughing roar which an enraged tiger makes when he charges, he rose to make the first spring of his rush. But this was just what Eastman had been waiting for; as the beast lifted himself into plain sight a single, well-placed bullet from the .577 caught him in the neck in front of, and above the shoulder. The terrific impact simply turned the great animal upside down, and he fell on his back with his head pointing away from Eastman!

When it was certain that he was dead, the helpers got down from the elephants and measured him as he lay. He was the largest of the nine that were killed during the fortnight in the camp, measuring ten feet and seven inches from tip to tail. It was not quite a record skin but very near. When cured it stretched to twelve feet six inches. As the Padri got in the first shot, it fell to his lot, for it is the first shot that counts according to the rules of big-game shooting.

Within that same year, and within a radius of ten miles of Chapar, including the nine shot by the Maharajah's camp, the total number of tigers killed by three shoots was twenty-three! Surja Kanta has gone to his Happy Hunting-grounds; but with the passing of his generation the great shoots *de luxe* have become far less common. More guns, of a kind, are possessed by the villagers and the expense of keeping up large herds of elephants in the day of motor-cars is proving too heavy a drain on the depleted revenue of even the large estates. In addition to this the younger members of many wealthy families have drifted into the cities; and ease, luxury, theaters—all the excitements of urban life, have killed the old sporting spirit.

The great influx of settlers from Bengal into Assam has also played a part. They have wiped out many of the heaviest jungles of the valley; and rich fields of rice and jute cover the places where even rhino roamed a generation ago. Still it remains a wild land. The hill forests continue to breed and feed into the plains thousands of big-game animals, to say nothing of myriads of lesser beasts, each year.

While the Padri was in charge of the work of the Mission in the Goalpara District, the bungalow in which he lived was located on the top of the little hill which is just

five miles above Jogi Ghopa, but on the opposite side of the Brahmaputra. It is indeed a charming place, and the view from the veranda is exceedingly beautiful. Looking across the river the many small hills are like little green islands set in a grassy sea. Fifty miles to the north, like a rich emerald shore, stand the mountains of the lower ranges of the Himalayas in Bhutan. In the summertime the great rain-storms roll and thunder up and down the immense plain between, like armies of black giants at play. The glory of the sun in his rising and setting, painting the inky clouds with rainbow splashes, and reflecting all the colors of the artist's palette on the broad, rolling river beneath, is an ecstacy of beauty that no words can describe. So too is the calm loveliness of winter. At times the entire plain is covered with low-lying white clouds of fog. Here and there the little hills are green islands, against which the snow waves of the mysterious sea dash and swirl. But as the morning sun rises and warms them in his generosity, they melt and fade like the ghosts of the night, and again the calm river appears beneath, ever flowing on his way to the great sea.

One day when they happened to be home from camp, the Padri was in his study writing when the Memsahib called to him.

"Come quick, dear! What's going on down in the river?"

From the verandah on the side of the bungalow which overlooked the Brahmaputra they could make out the head of some animal swimming in the water.

"It may be a pig or a deer," said he. "The river is rising fast, and it floods them off the sand islands."

"But why are the crows making such a fuss?" asked

the Memsahib. "There are hundreds of them, and you know they do not often bother with such animals."

"Yes, that's true. Could it be a leopard?"

Just then an Indian gentleman on the bank fired a charge of bird-shot at it. The animal was fully three hundred yards away, and shot would carry about one hundred! It at least proved that he had great confidence in his old, rusty shotgun! He could boast thereafter that he had hunted and shot at dangerous wild game! But the noise caused the animal to rear up partly out of the water, and they saw that it was a tiger! Watching till it swam ashore they saw it run toward a small, thatched house on the bank, and instead of looking for a door, rear up against the end wall, smash it in and go inside.

"Here goes!" said the Padri.

Taking his rifle and cartridges he started on the run down the hill. By this time hundreds of people from the town had turned out and stood about at a respectful distance. Every one had a club or a spear or a stick of some kind. A half-dozen of the Indian police even were there armed with their rifles. It was an interesting gathering!

Going as near as was wise, the Padri tried to see into the little house. On account of the glare of the sun he could make out nothing on the inside. Climbing up on a hut a hundred yards away he fired into the end of the hut where the tiger was. The first shot happened to wound it slightly on the foot, but this was sufficient to cause it to thrash about and growl, thus revealing its position. Two more shots were also fortunate, for it happened that although they were fired blindly through the wall of the hut, they both hit the animal in the body, and it began to roar prodigiously. It leaped down from

the platform on which it had been standing and started to go out the door; but as soon as it appeared in the light, a single shot through the fore shoulder completed the job.

When the tiger had entered the house two men were cooking their food. They had finished the rice and had put it into one deep, brass plate, and had covered it with another to keep it warm and clean while they prepared the *curry,* which is a spicy, hot vegetable or meat stew that is eaten with the rice.

As the tiger entered the house through the wall the men went out the door! They left everything, including their rice. When the hut was examined later they found that after it had been wounded, in rage and pain, the tiger had grabbed the two brass plates in its mouth and had chewed them full of holes! They were so bound and riveted together that it was with the greatest difficulty that they were pulled apart. The hard brass of which they were made, was about the thickness of a silver dime, and even though the teeth had pierced this doubled there was not a scratch on one of the fangs! It is not to be marveled at that human flesh and bone is like paper when a tiger catches a man!

Fifty years ago this portion of Assam was so wild that rhinoceroses were shot on the edge of the Brahmaputra River. Large areas were given over to howling jungle, and the people were in medieval darkness. Memories of merciless invasions and the curse of superstition held the minds of all classes in the bondage of fear; but today the waste places are cultivated and good land sells for a hundred dollars an acre; almost every large village has a school, and there are between fifteen and twenty thousand in the Christian community!

IV

BIG BUSINESS

For ages unnumbered, the Brahmaputra River which runs by the foot of the Kamakiya hill, has carried the fleets of country boats, moved by means of sails or oars, up and down according to the necessities or the whims of the dusky men who controlled them. In these latter years the steamers of the white men have trailed plumes of smoke in and out among their gleaming sails, as they too have come and gone over this highway of the eons, carrying great cargoes of tea, jute, oil, or coal to the sea, and the produce of the factories of other lands to satisfy the growing demands of the peoples of Assam.

The prodigal fertility of the valley has been one of the causes of the invasions of foreign armies, and it is the same humid, enervating, semitropical climate which has produced the profusion of vegetation that has been the chief cause of the deterioration of race after race which has been in possession of the land. The very small effort required to obtain food, and the inconsiderable amount of clothing and shelter necessary for protection, has tended to destroy incentive—the absence of compulsion to effort has always resulted in weakness and deterioration.

With a semitropical climate and a land with never-failing streams, famine has been unknown. In all history there is the record of but one period when there was anything like general distress on account of a failure of the crops; that was in the year 1665, but war and other such conditions had a part in that. Even so, no comparison

could be made with the real famines which occur in other parts of India, for in Assam it has always been possible to plant and grow some kind of a crop every month of the year.

In contrast with other parts of Asia where actual hunger was the lot of the population for at least a part of every year, Assam was a prize worthy of the great expeditions sent to conquer it by the surrounding nations. It is through the records left by the historians who accompanied the Mohammedan invasions that we have the earliest dependable information. One of these scribes, in writing about Gauhati as it was during the middle of the seventeenth century notes that in one month thirty-two thousand boats were counted at that place! Even if he should have confused the time, meaning year instead of month, the number indicates both a large population and great wealth. There can be no question as to the fact that vast numbers of boats were used on the river. Primarily they were intended for peaceful purposes, but the rulers would commandeer and use them during their many wars. There are many records of fleets numbering from eight hundred to a thousand boats. Among these were great sloops capable of carrying cannon twenty feet in length, and sufficiently strong to permit these unwieldly guns to be fired from their decks, and there were also many small, swift dugouts which could carry from fifty to sixty men each, and as each man would wield a paddle they could travel twenty miles an hour, but as the rowers were also the fighting men these mosquito-fleets were of great service in making surprise attacks.

But the records of the customs which were established by the British in the eighteenth century are even more reliable to give an idea of the prosperity of the land. Jogi

Ghopa and Goalpara were for many years the places where the men who "farmed the revenue" lived. The Monas River which flows into the Brahmaputra at the former place was then considered as the boundary between Assam and the British possessions in Bengal. The customs records show that in one year almost one million pounds of salt were imported into Assam up the Brahmaputra. When it is known that only the well-to-do could afford to buy salt, and it was a luxury for them, and that fully three-fourths of the population never used anything but some form of soda-ash for seasoning their foods, from this can be gained an idea of the large population of the valley at that time.

Compared with the traffic of modern times all these figures dwindle into insignificance, though they were in fact quite large. Nowadays, every month of the year, nearly one hundred freight trains go out, and the same number come into the valley. The great steamer companies run from twenty-five to thirty large river steamers of from six hundred to a thousand tons capacity each, every month; and in addition to these there are thousands of country boats carrying an immense tonnage plying on the many rivers every day and night of the year.

It is true that the exports from Assam are now out of all proportion to the population. The area of the entire valley is less than that of the State of Pennsylvania, and its population is but five millions—and of tea alone over two hundred million pounds are exported annually! In addition to this the immense tonnage of jute, cotton, coal, oil, and other natural products all emphasize the great wealth of the country. But of them all tea and jute are the two which easily hold first place. Tea is included under natural products because although a certain

amount of manufacture is necessary in the process which produces it, yet by far the largest part of the labor and expense in preparing it is incurred in its cultivation. Jute as it is shipped in bales is a raw product which is manufactured into cloth and other articles either in England, Germany, Japan, or the United States, rather than in the country of its origin. There are a number of mills in Bengal, but they use a very small part of the amount grown in Assam; and it should be noted that Bengal is an even larger producer of raw jute than is Assam. This crop is raised by the ordinary cultivator as it requires no particular money outlay. Tea, on the other hand, demands large capital.

The two most striking things about jute during the process of raising it, are its size and its smell. When the stalks are fully grown—and this comes to pass in about twelve weeks!—they are from twelve to thirteen feet high. The smell arises when the cut bundles are steeped in any water that happens to be available. Because the land is low-lying, roads and railways are usually elevated anywhere from five to fifteen feet. The earth for these is dug close to the base of the embankments, and thus it comes to pass that there is an almost continuous series of pits along practically every highway; and as these fill with rain-water they are favorite places for steeping the jute after it is cut. The result is that travel during this time of the year is one grand succession of miles of strong smells from the rotting binding substance which holds the fiber that is the jute of commerce.

When the process is complete and the fiber is extracted, it is sold to one or the other of the great companies—such as Reilly Bros., a very wealthy Greek concern—which are organized to purchase it from the cultivators.

The ramifications of this one business are so many and so interesting that it is worthy of a separate treatise. The crop is one of the sure money-bringers for the poor cultivator. It has also helped to confirm him in his perpetual bondage to the money-lender, whose name is legion and whose mercy is the cruelty of hell. On account of the value of the crop, the shylocks are always anxious to advance money, taking as security the crop of the next season, and the rate of return they demand ranges from one hundred to one thousand per cent. interest! While the larger firms, such as the one mentioned, will purchase crops at a guaranteed rate, and will advance money on this consideration, yet they are much more reasonable in their charges for the money loaned.

But the story of tea is different. In addition to the romance connected with its discovery and development, there are many experiences and circumstances which occur in the course of opening gardens in the heart of howling jungles, in managing thousands of ignorant coolies, and in running modern, well-equipped factories in the midst of a fifteenth-century civilization, that make the life of a planter almost a constant round of interest, if not excitement. On account of the large amount of money that must be invested in land and equipment, and because of the large scale of operations which must be carried on, Europeans are in charge of all the big gardens. The story of one of these will tell the story of all of them, in such large measure, that it will suffice to recount a few of the things which occurred in and near the Sibsagar District, to put over the idea of the fascination and romance of life "in tea"—for any man engaged in planting in Assam will speak of his occupation as being "in tea."

The Attabarrie Garden near the town of Sibsagar is one of the showplaces in the industry. The bungalow and factory are built on the bank of one of the many large tanks which were constructed by the Ahom kings some three hundred years ago. As there are no hills in this part of the valley, the elevation afforded by the embankment gives a beautiful outlook in all directions. Being situated in the midst of great tea-gardens, the surrounding country has the appearance of a beautiful park. While it is one of the best of the estates in Assam yet it is also thoroughly representative. Hunt, the manager, has brought it up from a second-rate proposition of twenty years ago, till the dividends paid on the investment are among the best in the valley.

One evening when the Padri was sitting with Hunt, looking out over the tank toward the road that disappears way down in the distance among the tea, Hunt said to him:

"Did you feel the earthquake the other night?"

"Yes indeed!" he answered. "We had gone to bed, but when the earthquake came I called to my wife and gallantly led the way out onto the verandah! We have a porch swing there, and while we were waiting to see if there was a real, honest-to-goodness shock coming I happened to look at the swing and noticed that it was moving. It showed that the quake wave had traveled from west to east, as the motion was in that direction."

"It was a pretty fair shake. It rattled things here quite a bit. But did I ever tell you my experience in the big earthquake of 1897?" asked Hunt. "It was really quite remarkable."

"No, but I'd like to hear it. You were quite young in tea then, were you not?"

"Yes. I had been out from home just a few years and was an assistant in a garden over in Sylhet at the time. The day of the earthquake, a Saturday, I was in bed with black-water fever. I had been laid up for days, and was getting no better. By this time I had become so weak that I could not lift my head from the pillow. The manager and the other assistant had even to feed me.

"Toward evening, after giving me my medicine, they both went out to see to the work, and I was left alone. Suddenly I felt the bed rise and fall. At the same time there was a great rumble, the walls of the room seemed to wave about, and the ceiling seemed to pucker into hollows. The thought flashed into my mind, 'Earthquake'! The bed seemed to hit the floor with a bump, the whole house was shaking, and it looked as though the walls would fall in. . . I threw off the bed-clothes, rushed to one of the doors, and tried to pull it open, but the frame had sagged down and was holding it tight. Remember, I had been so weak that I could not lift my head! I rushed to the other door and it also stuck. With the increased swaying of the house I was sure that it was going to fall in on me; in desperation I threw myself against the door and burst it open. Running out into the compound I noticed how funny everything looked. Trees were waving wildly, the cows and goats were standing bawling, with their legs all spraddled out, the coolies were staggering about—some were lying on the ground, calling on their gods; and even the factory looked drunk and tired, and, as I watched, it also lay down!

"As soon as the manager and assistant could get back to the bungalow they brought a lot of the coolies to help dig me out from under the ruins, for it too had gone down flat; but, to their intense surprise, they found me standing

out in the compound holding to a tree; a little weak, but my fever was entirely gone! Nor did it ever return! I went to work the next morning, and kept right on the job too, for it was a big task to get everything in shape again. The entire factory, as well as the bungalow and coolie lines, had to be rebuilt from the ground up, and all this in addition to getting the garden ready for the next year's crop.

"Whatever cured the fever no one knows. Doctors inquired, and examined, and speculated; the case was reported to the medical journals, but there is no answer yet!"

"That surely was remarkable! I wonder it could have been," began the Padri, "but what's the use in wondering? The doctors could not understand, so we laymen have little chance, that is certain. But had that earthquake occurred at night instead of in the afternoon when people were away from their houses, thousands of lives would have been lost. I understand that only one European was killed. His name was McCabe—in Shillong. He was a hard man to kill. Had you heard of it?"

"No, what happened?"

"He was quite a hunter, and, some years before the earthquake, had been out with a friend after a rogue elephant. They had their camp on one of the smaller rivers that flows into the Brahmaputra. One day they heard that the tusker had been seen alone some distance up the stream. Taking several men to row a small boat, they went to have a 'look-see.' They had not gone far when, in rounding a turn they saw the elephant standing about a hundred yards from the water. He made no move to go away, but stood waving his ears back and forth and looking at them with little, pig eyes.

"'Toss a penny who shoots first?' said McCabe.

"The toss fell to him and he said, 'You sit in the boat to cover me, and I'll go halfway to where he is so as to be sure of getting a good shot. If he comes for me, I can get back the fifty yards before he makes it, and you can have a pot at him too.'

"He went as arranged, and taking deliberate aim, fired at the forehead of the elephant. As you know the brain-shot is the only really good one, but it is hard to get. Lainé, the Deputy Commissioner, once put a .405, nickel-cased Winchester bullet into the forehead of another rogue, and it merely shook its head and walked away. A few days later an Indian gentleman killed it, and they found that Lainé's bullet had gone into the bone of the head a full ten inches! It had missed the brain and had done little damage.

"Well, when McCabe fired, the rogue started for him at the flash. He turned and started to run for the boat, but, before he had covered half the fifty yards, the elephant was on him, caught him in its trunk and proceeded simply to smash him to pieces. His friend fired into it, and after a while it left McCabe on account of the pain from the bullet wounds. How he ever lived is a mystery. The doctors say that almost every bone in his body was broken. But the speed of an elephant is almost more than can be believed.

"In telling of the occurrence afterward, McCabe said, 'Well, the only thing that can kill me now is an earthquake,' and he was the only one that the earthquake got!"

"Some of the things that actually happen out here on the edge of nowhere sound like fairy tales to the folks at home, and they think that we exaggerate," said Hunt;

but happening to notice the time he rose, saying: "Say, I'll have to get over to the factory. Come along, and I'll show you the process of making tea."

All this time they had been sitting on the veranda, and there had been a sweet, humming sound from the tea-house. It was the fan on one of the driers. But in the meantime the pluckers from the garden had begun to come in; it was the sight of them coming up the road that reminded him that it was time to see to the weighing of the green leaf. Streams of women and girls, and a few men, brought each one a basket containing the leaf that had been plucked during the afternoon. Indian clerks stood by the scales to note the weight, but a European assistant stood by to check each one.

"Suji, ten seers," he said.

"Sorola, eight seers."

"Horumai, six."

"Say," said the Padri, "you have about a thousand men, women, and children at work, do you know all their names?"

"Promole, eight seers—Well, not quite all, but most of these. Buriai, ten—They come along almost every day, and so I remember them."

The long line passed from the weighing-in place across the road into the large withering-house. This was a modern, three-story building. The posts and beams were of steel, and the roof was corrugated iron, but in order that there might be free circulation of air it had no sides. It was a hundred and thirty feet long and thirty feet high. The leaf was spread on racks, which were timber frames having woven wire bottoms, where it was left till it began to wither, thus starting the process which is completed in the factory.

"Who are you?" asked Hunt, of a sick-looking boy sitting on the ground near the steps.

"I'm Vishanram's son," answered the little fellow. "I have a bad cough, and it makes me so weak that I must rest."

"You go to the hospital. There is plenty of room. Tell the Doctor Babu that I sent you. He will give you food too."

"We provide all kinds of things for the coolies these days," said Hunt to the Padri. "Good houses, good water, good pay, and even a moving-picture show at their feast times or in between! Mothers get a bonus and all such. Formerly they did have a bad time, some managers were hard and unmerciful, but now that is all changed, and the coolie in tea is well cared for indeed. The law is so strict that the industry is really being penalized; it is the coolie who has all the protection now. The recent disturbances during the Gandhi agitation, the epidemic of strikes on many gardens, the beating and even killing of white men, all this makes us wonder what the end will be.

"Oh well, 'what can do'?" Shaking off the thought that is oppressing all Europeans in India, as well as Assam, these days, he said: "Come this way, I'll take you round. Let's start at the beginning of things."

Entering the factory, he led the way to the rollers, large machines having a table that moves back and forth under a boxlike receptacle which has no bottom, and which also moves with a circular motion, just clearing the table beneath. The leaf is put into the container and rests on the table, and as both parts of the machine move in opposite directions, it rolls the leaf round and round till it is softened and the cells of the leaf-structure are broken.

"The purpose of breaking down the cells of the leaf," explained Hunt, "is that the essential oils and chemicals which they contain may be released into the leaf tissue. The next part of the process, fermenting, continues it, but sets up other chemical changes also, and these continue up to the time it is 'fired' (dried).

"That rolled leaf is being taken to the fermenting-room now," he said as a man passed with a large basketful. "Come and see it."

He led the way into a dark, damp, cool room. On the floor, arranged in the order in which it had been rolled, the leaf was piled in squares, but it was leveled down to not more than six inches in depth. "That dark brown section you see over there, was the first put in this shift. The dark color is on account of the oxidization of the tannin it contains. It is just ready to fire," explained Hunt.

Taking the Padri back into the factory, he showed him the battery of driers. "These," he said, "are really nothing but stoves. The fire is under the other end back there where you see that fellow putting in a little coal. The heat is drawn either up or down inside it through the trays on which the leaf is spread. This is done by a large fan, and it depends on the type of drier whether it forces the air in or draws it through a machine. That one just there is the kind that has the fan that makes the hum you have been hearing. It is a Paragon. The other kind works more quietly.

"The rolled and fermented leaf is fed in at this end and is spread evenly over the trays inside. These are arranged one above the other, and as the process continues, the leaf passes down from one to the other till it is completely dry; notice it coming out at the bottom of that machine.

The time required for it to pass through is regulated according to the condition of the leaf and the result that is desired. But the quality of tea produced is really very uniform."

Pointing to another machine that had a series of sieves which both jiggled and revolved, he said: "That is a sifter. It separates the dried tea into the different grades of commerce. It is all put through here before it is taken to the bins for storage till we have the required quantity of each kind for packing. But before it is put into the boxes it is fired again. Unless it is absolutely dry it will spoil during shipment."

When they returned to the bungalow, they met Piggott, the assistant from a neighboring garden, who had dropped in. He is a fine upstanding young fellow, an excellent man at his work, and a thorough gentleman.

"I say, Padri," he said, "your bunch of Christians on my garden surely do keep things a stirring! Bhorot, the evangelist, was in to see me the other day about Budu. You know the old man, he lives in the garden lines near your village. He had arranged a marriage for his daughter with Horu's son, but now he wants to back out. He is trying to make them return the presents that were given, and also wants them to recompense him for the expense of the feast he gave when the announcement was made!"

"Well," said the Padri, "such is life! That Kongia church is one of the 'stirringest' propositions in the Association. You know they are a mixed lot, and it is hard for people of different races to pull together, especially during the first generation after they become Christian. But as Budu and Horu are both in your lines and under you directly, could you kindly take them in hand?

It is really more a social than a religious matter as yet; still as one of them threatens to go back to Hinduism, and the other is ready to institute a suit in court, it is rather complex. But if you can help straighten it out I shall surely be grateful."

"How did that last meeting of your Indian churches come off?" asked Hunt.

"Remarkably well," answered the Padri. "You remember how it rained? Everything there at Samaguri was prepared. They had grass huts ready for seven or eight hundred people. The temporary meeting-house was up and thatched, but as it is usually dry at that time of the year, they had not put on a very heavy layer of straw . . . and then it went and rained for fourteen days straight! Between showers they gave all the houses a second layer of straw and had them quite waterproof. They had even built three good camp-houses for the white people who were expected. Mr. and Mrs. Boggs from Jorhat were to be there. You know Boggs, don't you, Hunt? He was in Sibsagar at the Conference when Mrs. Hunt and you drove in."

"Do you mean the heavy-set, jolly fellow? Isn't he the one they call 'Sad' Boggs? Yes, I met him and Mrs. Boggs, too," said Hunt.

"That 'Sad' to his name is rather funny. It doesn't suit at all, for he is one of the jolliest ever," said the Padri. "The reason of it is that his initials happen to be S. A. D.—hence the rest! Well, they were coming by car, but as he had to go to Golaghat, which is twenty-six miles in the other direction, to marry two young missionaries, he was planning to drive from there to Samaguri near the Tilaijan garden, ninety-three miles over the worst roads there are, the same day! But as it continued to rain

and the mud got deeper and deeper, Mrs. Boggs wired that she was coming by train, and he would drive alone. At that time the railroad into Sibsagar was not opened and so I went the ten miles in the car to the station. It happened that the rain stopped long enough to let me through. And then it started again.

"The day before the meeting was set to begin, she said, 'I wonder would it be possible to send out word to have the Association put off? The people will all catch cold and be sick.'

"'Too late, I'm afraid,' was the answer, 'some of the delegates and their friends are already on the road. When they have to walk thirty or forty miles they start the day before. It is too bad, but I expect that there will be a couple hundred there anyway. The local community can turn out that many.'

"As it kept on raining we waited till the second day of the meeting, and then I started up the new railroad on a construction train, leaving Mrs. Boggs with the Memsahib. None of them, including Boggs, the large end of a hundred miles away, ever did get through. My trip on the muddy line was at least interesting! At one place the engine ran off the track. At another I had to sit for hours at one of the little stations till a push-trolley came down several miles from where the upper section work-train was held up by a sinking of the line that it could not cross! By the time I got to the next station about nine miles beyond this it was so late that I had to spend the night in the dirty van. But it was some trip! And to think of it! If the road had been dry it was but a two-hour drive by car!

"When I did get to the place I found that the meeting had been going on according to schedule, and instead of

TEA

The Bushes Are Planted in Rows About Five Feet Apart and so Pruned that They Meet at the Top, Forming a Flat Surface. They Are Kept About Three Feet High

TEA

Sorted in Piles, Ready to Be Taken to the Storage Bins

the couple hundred we thought would be there, I found 1,028 people from all over the District! It was great!"

"How did they get along without you being there?" asked Hunt.

"Oh, in this field that is easy. The people themselves carry the work. They regard me as just their teacher and care for the details of administration themselves. They enjoy it too. You would be delighted to see the dignity with which they conduct such a great meeting. So far as assistance from any one outside their own churches is concerned they do not need it. They prepare all the buildings and make the arrangements for feeding those who attend through their own committees. The same holds good in regard to all the work of their local organizations. They do not have a pice of help from the Mission except a very small amount to assist them in paying traveling evangelists, but these men do not preach in the local churches. There is a very small sum given to help in their small village schools that are not conveniently located so that the children can go to one of the Government schools. But in addition to carrying on their own work the Association raised twelve hundred rupees last year, and this was for touring evangelists only."

"Do you have any wealthy Assamese of good family among them?" asked Hunt.

"No, not one. There are very few that can be called Assamese at all. Most of the leaders, as well as the majority of the members, were formerly coolies. Many of them still work in the gardens in the district. One of the preachers, Mosa, worked as a boy in the tea-house. He sorted, and when he was a little larger, tied the bundles in which tea was shipped in those days before boxes were used, and later when he grew up and had

saved money he bought land and lived in the little village near Sibsagar for many years. The story of most of them is similar. You would scarcely expect it of them, but it would interest you to go there and hear some of your own coolies discussing theology! And they are intelligent in regard to these things, too!"

"Who would have believed it?" said Piggott. "Some of them give us enough trouble on the garden, Padri."

"That's probably true. But isn't Bhorot the evangelist one of the best fellows in that neighborhood to help you when not only the Christians, but the others, get into trouble?"

"Yes, that's true. He is a good fellow."

"But I've wandered from the story of the Association meeting. They carried it on the usual time, and it was a real success. The delegates gave their reports, and the total number of Christian communities is now sixty-five. The total membership is over three thousand—that is just for this field. There are over a hundred and fifty thousand in all the missions in Assam, and they reported over two hundred additions for the Sibsagar field during the year."

"That is great," said Piggott. "I did not know that there were so many."

"Yes," answered the Padri, "the number looks fairly large, but compared with the entire population it is really small. But the willingness of the Christians to take over all that they can carry is the part that is encouraging."

Among the problems that the Association discussed, in addition to the usual consideration of the condition of the churches and the community, was one that has been caused by big business as it has been developed in Assam. Wherever the different races of men meet they inevitably

mingle. This is but the statement of an axiom. But as the process is contrary to the commonly accepted Christian morality it is an exceedingly great detriment to the spread of Christianity. This may be illustrated by the case of John Smith (whose name was something else).

Forty years ago last November, when the four-funnel towing and passenger steamer *Ginwali* paddled slowly up the Brahmaputra, John Smith was one of the passengers. He had been sent from Calcutta to take charge of the Steamer Company's Agency at Janti Mukh Ghat. He was a young fellow just out from England, and came under a five-year agreement. At home there had seemed to be no chance for advancement. The old families, as well as the newer ones of wealth, used their influence to keep the remunerative posts for their own sons and relatives. Smith was from the farmer class. His father had given him as much education as possible, but college was not for such as he in that day. The result was that all he could look forward to was to live and die on a pittance, which at its largest might amount to ten dollars a week. But he was ambitious, and knowing that service abroad had always been an outlet for British energy for generations past, he had accepted the post in the Steamer Company.

He found life at the Ghat very monotonous. Small, rather fast steamers in those days carried mails and passengers and came and went with fair regularity, but they spent little time at the ghats. The main-liners, as the cargo boats were called, were very irregular. Sometimes two or three weeks would elapse during which he would have no one with whom he could sit down and talk. There was one clerk, an Indian, but he could not speak two sentences in English correctly. There were coolies living

on the flat, which was the receiving boat, but they were men of an entirely different world from a man brought up in England.

True, there was shooting. Tigers came and drank at the river in sight of the flat. Florican were plentiful; ducks, geese, and green pigeons came over in flocks numbering tens of thousands of individual birds. Deer, wild buffalo, and game of many kinds were to be had with no more effort than was required in making a tramp of a few miles.

But there was no incentive to hunt. After bagging several tigers, a leopard, some deer, and as many of the other varieties as he wished to taste, as there was no one with whom to share the excitement and the pleasure, lone shooting tramps began to pall. But it was when the main-liner, with its three or four flats in tow, would laboriously paddle into view and, many hours after it would be first sighted down the stream, finally tie up, that life would be different. Then he would get all the news and gossip of the river. The captains and superior officers of the boats in those days were Europeans, and they were regular newspapers, so far as the happenings at other ghats were concerned, and these landing-places were located every thirty or forty miles along the Brahmaputra, clear up to Dibrugahr. Beyond this latter station the large boats could not go. All goods for the upper river as far as, and beyond, Sadiya were carried in country boats.

Very often there would be a party of planters or other Europeans on board the steamer when it would tie up. It was the usual thing for Europeans in Assam, or even in Bengal to take the long, presumably restful trip on the river if they happened to be run down through attacks

of malaria. It is to be doubted whether the trip did really give to these men the maximum benefit that such a restful time should. As it was the custom for the captains of these steamers to cater for the passengers, and as quite a part of their profit came from the amount of liquor the passengers consumed, it usually came to pass that life was rather hectic for those taking these trips. Especially was this true when the steamer would lie at a ghat for two or three days loading or unloading cargo. Those were the days of unlimited drink, and it was not counted reprehensible for a man to go to bed drunk, nor was this the worst feature of the sprees; for when the boat would finally pull out and chug away, the monotony was more deadly than ever.

To pass away the time, Smith would take his gun, of an evening, and stroll over to the near-by Indian village. In time he became acquainted with the local dialect and could sit down and chat with the head man and the young braves, and as he had the only gun in the neighborhood, they were but too glad to go along with him to help him get a deer or a wild pig. They were very fond of meat, and he was glad to share with them. In time he found them quite companionable, humorous in their simple way, and rather pleasant companions when he began to understand their point of view.

Seeing the young daughter of the head man about, and, as she was a very comely young woman—so many of the girls of the tribe are when they are in their teens—he finally spoke to the father asking for her. Giving him a gift of a hundred rupees he took the girl to his flat. He did not marry her, that would have been considered *infra dig.;* nor was she ever seen about when there were other white people present, for conscience was not dead,

and Smith knew that he was doing wrong. But in spite of this he had no intention of marrying her. He planned to make sufficient money to enable him to retire to England, where he would marry the girl to whom he had been engaged for some years. In that case the dark-skinned woman would be returned to the village with her (and his) children. Oh, yes, he would build her a house and settle a little plot of land on her, but marry a "nigger"? Never!

However, Smith was not able to go to England again. Drink was of no assistance in building up efficiency, but he was able to make a little money through contracting for the boating of materials to and from the tea-gardens which were developing along the small rivers which flowed into the Brahmaputra and which were served from his ghat. He was never able to leave the business to others, for there was no one to be trusted to handle money for some one else.

In addition to this his children grew up. They were sent away to various schools in order that they might be educated; for was their name not Smith? Did they not have proud white blood in their veins? Ah yes, they were sahibs and must have the white man's education! But when the girls and boys saw the condition of other European children and realized how matters were in their own home, they insisted that their father marry the woman who had been so faithful to him all these years; he did this—but in so doing became an outcast to his own people!

So it is in tea-gardens, and in fact in all places where the currents in the flow of the races of men meet; not only is there growth in wealth and trade, there is also traffic in souls—a by-product of big business.

This is the problem which the Association in Sibsagar had to face in relation to its effort to spread the teachings of the religion which white men have brought to India; and which is the faith professed by practically all Europeans in the Orient. It is also the problem of the quite large Anglo-Indian (formerly called the Eurasian) community, but from a different angle. The Christian worker has to meet it on its moral basis. Not only is it wrong in itself but it is probably the greatest single detriment that exists to the spread of the idealism of Christ. But from the standpoint of the indigenous community the continuation of the evil serves to increase the very severe handicap which they have to contend with. From the standpoint of the simple basic necessity of obtaining food and shelter the increase of the community decreases opportunity. The reason for this is the attitude of the different communities to each other. On account of the shame implied, the European cannot show favor to his offspring. Because the Anglo-Indian feels that he is better than the Indian, he has no sympathy for the dark people of the land. And the Indian knowing the source from which the lighter man has sprung, and resenting his attitude, and especially, inasmuch as the more genteel jobs filled by the Anglo-Indian the less there will be of this type for himself and his own relatives, sets himself in definite opposition to the other community from every standpoint.

While there is no doubt as to the final outcome of the fight, for there are able men among the mixed community who will help them obtain their rights, yet the vital problem which is of real interest to every right-thinking person in the land is in regard to the continuation of the process. While it has always been a sin in the sight of

God and man, yet the sin is more despicable now that men can bring their wives to India if they desire. While Assam is still a frontier province, and though in many parts wild men and wild animals abound, yet with the opening up of the valley and the hills by the construction of roads and railroads, by the introduction of motor-cars, through the comfort that mechanical refrigeration and electricity give, conditions are so ameliorated that in comparison, with the difficulty of marriage, employment, and life in general in England today, a wife can live as comfortably in Assam as in England; and the fact is that for many there is exceedingly much more luxury than conditions in England now permit.

To a large extent the remedy lies in the hands of the great companies which control large blocks of gardens and big business generally. If they will realize that the loss to their shareholders is very considerable on account of the lessened efficiency of men who live a shamed life; and also that in addition to this the coolie labor on the gardens becomes inferior on account of the loss of prestige of the Europeans who debase themselves with persons from among the coolies themselves—if these things are realized the Boards of Managers can, and will, put a stop to them. If married men only were engaged for positions in the Orient the present condition would practically disappear within a very few years.

An objection which has been raised is that salaries paid to young men coming out are too small to permit them to live in comfort if they are married. That this is not the real reason is shown by the fact that married missionaries, and even some assistants in various firms in India, live in considerable comfort on the same salary, or even less, than the usual pay of the unmarried man in

Photo by C. R. Pawsey.

NAGA GIRL

Her Features Are Typical of the Hill Peoples of Burmo-Tibetan Origin. This Includes the Garos, Nagas, Abors, etc.

business in India. Naturally this implies careful management in the home. It does not permit expensive habits such as heavy drinking, gambling, expensive games such as polo, or large club bills. But the real fact in the matter is that what is required is the will to live within the income, and it can be done!

While it may not be realized by many, yet the big business of altering the basic spiritual outlook of all the races of the land and the big business of making many wealthy through the labor of the same people, the work of Missions and the work of organized capital, are interdependent. Foreign-controlled industries cannot succeed without the moral influence which missionaries bring; and the work of making known the ideal of Christianity can be rendered exceedingly difficult unless the spirit of Christ permeates the methods and spirit of big business in the Orient.

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V

FEE FAI FO FUM

Rajah Sib Singh had not been on the throne at Rangpur, which is Sibsagar, more than six months after he had been crowned, following the death of his father in Gauhati, till he himself fell ill with the same kind of fever and ague which had caused the death of Rudra Singh. Fearing the demon Jvar above all the evil spirits, he caused very special efforts to be made to propitiate him. The temples rang day and night with the chanting of hymns, *mantras* (sacred texts), and the ringing of bells and beating of gongs. The Brahmans in the temples of the new religion and the village priests in their prayer-houses called on the Hindu gods; but even the older gods, whose worship was tabu since the Hindu teachers were in power, were invoked with horrid, secret rites in the dark caverns of the forests, but nothing seemed to avail. Day and night the fire and cold would torture the miserable Rajah.

One day word was brought in to the Rani, Fuleswari, that four holy men from the Land of the North had come to the palace gates and were desirous of an audience with her. They had informed the warder that they could help the Rajah recover from his illness. As the *purdah* system of seclusion was not in fashion at that time, the Rani caused them to be brought into her presence.

When they entered the hall, she saw that they were different from the men of the valley. Their dress and mien were peculiar. In stature they were small, but their

bodies were well-developed and sturdy. Their faces were broad, the color of their skin was a ruddy brown, and it was tanned and wrinkled through much exposure to the cold winds of the high mountains from which they had come. And although their eyes slanted somewhat their countenances were pleasant to look upon.

She noticed that the clothing that they wore was different from that of any of the people on the plains. It consisted of a long, dark coat made of heavy material such as none of her weavers could produce. The top garment was wrapped across the front of their bodies and fastened at the waist with a single tape. The sleeves were very full indeed, even a cubit in width and as much again longer than their arms. The lining was a rich red, and when they were rolled up, this gave them a large, bright cuff.

On their heads they wore no covering. Being close-cropped, she thought that most probably they were priests of some strange sect, and so it proved when she made inquiries.

She was interested to notice the high boots which they wore. Nothing like them had ever been seen in Rangpur. They were made of cloth in which there was a bright red stripe running down the side. There was also a turned-down cuff on the top, and it too was red. The soles of the boots were of leather which was well sewn with fine thongs of the same material.

After they had made their obeisance to the Rani, and, since they were holy men, had been given permission to sit before her, she spoke to them:

"Holy fathers, you have honored the humble dwelling of my noble lord. Your coming is auspicious, and may the blessing of the gods attend you. Whence have you

come? Whither do you go? And what is the purpose of your visit and your journey?"

The leader of the four lamas, for they were Buddhists from Thibet, answered:

"Most gracious and worthy Rani, we, your humble servants are travelers from the great land of the living Buddha which lies beyond the eternal snow. We have come a journey of many moons seeking to know the ways and customs of the peoples of the land of plains. We are priests belonging to the great monastery in Lahassa; and at the command of our superior, seek to learn whether there be any followers of the Lord Buddha among these nations."

Being more interested in her husband's condition than in religious discussion, although at any other time she would have been keen to learn of the beliefs of other strange peoples, she asked:

"Do you, in the profundity of your wisdom, and as the result of your studies into the secret ways of the holy gods and the ill-disposed demons, know any charm or medicament that will drive away the demon-god Jvar, lord of burning fever, who was born of a drop of perspiration that fell from the forehead of the god of gods?"

"Wandering as we do, in the dark and musty forests, your Majesty," answered the leader of the lamas, "we very often come in contact with the demon fever, and by the grace of the Lord Buddha, we have found a medicine which will drive him from the human frame. If, by your Majesty's commands, the necessary materials for the proper ceremonies can be furnished us, we will prepare them according to the proper formula. When the medicine is prepared, in order to assure you of its safety, I myself will partake of it in your presence. It can at

the same time be administered to several slaves. When there has passed sufficient time to show that it is not poison, it can then be given to your royal husband, and it will cure him within three days."

By order of the Rani this was done. The lamas produced a stock of dried herbs, bark, bone, and such things which they had carried in the folds of their voluminous garments, and having powdered different quantities of the materials into a concoction exceedingly bitter to the taste, they placed it on a small table which they set in front of them.

Lighting sticks of incense of a kind that had never been seen in Rangpur, they arranged themselves carefully in a row, and for a full hour recited in unison portions from their sacred scriptures, incantations, and charms.

The chief lama then partook of the concoction in the presence of the Rani and her lords. It was administered to two slaves who swallowed it with contorted faces and with shivering bodies, for it was exceedingly bitter; and in addition to this they were very reluctant, for they could not tell whether death waited in the foreign medicine or not. All three who had partaken of it were kept under careful supervision for several hours, and as nothing happened, the preparation was administered to the Rajah, under the direction of the lama himself.

True to the promise that had been made, by the next day the fever had abated, and on the third morning it was entirely gone! Great was the rejoicing in the royal palace! The whole town of Rangpur was *en fete,* but from the greatest to the least, all stood in great awe of the marvel-working priests. Rajah Sib Singh desired to load them with gifts and honors, but the head lama said to him:

"Your Royal Highness, we are but poor travelers, who having renounced the vanities of wealth and desire, have no wish for the burden of transient things. We cannot remain. The supreme ruler of our order has commanded, and we are sworn to obedience."

As it was then, so to this day, the "fee fai fo fum" system of mingled superstition and medicine persists among practically every nation of the Orient. With all the hocus-pocus, the element of faith plays its great part in curing many diseases. Still, in addition to this, many valuable remedies have been known and used for centuries. Herbs, bark, animal glands, metals—all have played their part; and as we know, these are the sources of practically all medicines. Still, in addition to these things which really have curative powers, dried snakes, toads, offal, and many other materials are regularly used by those who pretend to cure disease among the non-Christian nations.

In preparing their doses, the practise of some modern physicians of good repute was followed. Drugs of many kinds are often made up into a "shotgun prescription"—with the purpose that if one ingredient will not hit the mark, the other will! So it is the practise among indigenous doctors to mix herbs, leaves, ground bone, dried lizard, and even more vile materials into a horrid mess, and it often happens that there is something in it that does the patient good—if it does not happen to kill him! Among the Hindus the combination of the use of medicines with charms, amulets, talismans, etc., is called the Ayurvedic "system." While it is of great antiquity, it is in no sense scientific, and its advantage to mankind is slight.

Among the Mohammedans in Assam, as well as in the rest of the world of Islam, is another system of medi-

cine. This is based on Arabian practise which originated in the dark ages. It is and has been non-progressive for many centuries, and while their *hakims,* as the doctors are called, have many good remedies, yet as with all the ancient systems, very great faith is placed in charms. These take the form of little round tubes, or packets, which contain texts from the Koran written on paper or some other such material. They are tied to the arm or hung upon some other part of the body, both for the purpose of charming away disease which might have a desire to fix itself upon the individual, and also to cure any ill that is already present. But the Mohammedans also have many drugs, some of which are accepted in modern practise, but with them as with every people and tribe of the Orient, their "system" includes some good drugs and the element of faith-healing compounded with an immense amount of superstition and hocus-pocus.

The difficulty is not that there are no good medicines known or used, but that the prescriptions which include these are kept as family secrets. This selfishness is but natural, for there has never been any teaching or religion under the sun, save Christianity, which has taught unselfish, disinterested service for others. In addition to this is the lack of the scientific ideal. There is no coordination of results or methods, no publication or comparison of discoveries; in fact there is the entire lack of both the scientific and the unselfish spirit, which must inspire medicine if it is to be of benefit to more than the individual practitioner.

On the other hand, the extent to which modern medicine has been introduced into Assam, and in fact into the whole of India, and is driving out the wild demons of the far frontiers, is not known to the very ones in Europe and

America who are interested in the welfare of the people of these lands. The Padri and the Memsahib have been asked often, when they were on furlough, "Is it true that there is not a single hospital in all Assam? What do you do when you are taken sick? We are told that there are only two or three doctors in all the country!"

Such misunderstanding may be due to either wrong information, or to the lack of it, but it also comes to pass on account of the lack of clarity in the statements of travelers and missionaries. In many cases the failure to mention other efforts of similar character is taken by those who hear as an indication that there is nothing else of the kind being done. In addition to this the overemphasis of the small phase of work in which the individual is interested, tends to exclude greater and perhaps infinitely more worth-while efforts from recognition. The result is that an entirely incorrect impression is given to those who have no means of checking up the facts.

In Assam, as in all countries under the British Government, the great outstanding philanthropy of the rulers is the effort they make to help the people by introducing modern medicine and surgery, and making them available to the entire population. Naturally it is impossible for Government or any other organization to finance such a philanthropy so that it will bring a doctor and a hospital into every village; but, speaking generally, the result of the marvelous effort of the British in India has been to bring modern treatment within the reach of practically every village on the plains of India. Even in the hills, which are sparsely settled, and much more loosely administered than the plains, doctors having a number of dispensaries in each area offer relief to the people.

It should be recognized that this is a real philanthropy

on the part of Government. There is really no need, nor any compulsion from the standpoint of administration, that would require any kind of general medical effort. In addition to this the demand has not arisen from the people themselves, for, like modern education, it has been superimposed from above, as it were, and has not as in Christian lands arisen from among the people themselves. Nor are the benefits of Western medicine sufficiently appreciated even now, to create a general demand for medical schools for the training of doctors. The small class that is educated wish it because of the opportunities of obtaining service under Government which it opens up to them; but the statement that there is no general desire for European medicine is shown to be reasonably correct by the fact that there has been practically no inclination on the part of wealthy Indians to finance institutions for the purpose. With a very few praiseworthy exceptions, all the funds for schools and hospitals have come from the foreign Government!

The work being done in the Brahmaputra valley is a sample of the enormous effort being made by the British all over India, to ameliorate the condition of the people. In this comparatively small area with about one per cent. of the entire population, there are at least seven civil surgeons, English or Indian, with degrees received in England. In addition to these there are some thirty other European doctors, including with these the Anglo-Indians, with similar training and degrees, who are employed by the tea and other industries. The number of Indian doctors in Government service with degrees from recognized Indian medical schools is more than three thousand. It is an interesting fact that among a population of three and one-half million people there are six thousand two hun-

dred men and women who depend for their livelihood on the practise of some phase of European medicine!

There is generous provision made so that treatment and medicine are available, for the most part free of charge, to practically all who desire them. Scattered all over the valley and in the hills, are approximately three hundred hospitals and dispensaries. While part of these are conducted by the tea-gardens, yet their treatment is free to a large number of the people. Taking into consideration the amount of jungle, unsettled land and reserves, and the fact that the population is concentrated in the cultivable areas, it is easily seen that modern medical treatment can be obtained by a majority of the people who are willing to go or send for it the same distance that they regularly walk to market each week; for, in practically the whole of India a dispensary, or a doctor with some training, can be reached within that distance.

The status of missions in medical work has changed utterly from what it was in former years. When the early white men came they were the only persons who knew anything of modern remedies. Very often they were the only kindly-disposed people within many days' journey who in the spirit of benevolence did not demand a return for a service. The very incentive which led missionaries to go to the land compelled them to try to serve the people by easing their pain. But the amount of money essential to establish anything like an adequate medical work that would reach even a very small part of the people, has never been available to any Mission in any part of India. The result is that in a *very few* places only is there a Mission hospital or training-school worthy of comparison with the very many excellent Government institutions.

Medical work as a handmaid to evangelism has been a great power in some places, but, separated from this there is no place for it as a phase of Christian missions to India. It is true that Jesus himself did heal, but curing the diseases of the body had a very, very minor place in his thought and effort. But in Assam at least there has never been a serious attempt to do a thorough, wide-spread medical work. In all the Missions in the province there has never been a half-dozen doctors carrying on a continuous work, and there is but one single Mission hospital that has anything approaching an adequate equipment in buildings and staff; this is the institution of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Mission in Shillong.

Except that the doctors sent out have been of great assistance to missionaries in their illnesses and that they have done as much as possible with poor equipment, the medical Mission work attempted in Assam is not worthy of the name. This has in no wise been the fault of the doctors or of the Missions, but simply because this, which is in reality a most praise-worthy Christian philanthropy, has been regarded by the church in America as of secondary importance, and it has therefore been supported accordingly. While it has not been entirely forgotten, yet it is well to bring to mind again that the basic *raison d'être* of Christian missions is not the education of the subjects of a foreign government, nor the healing of their bodies, but evangelism; and by this is meant making known the message of Christ and leading people to accept it.

In the efforts of Christian people to overcome conditions which have resulted in the death of millions through the superstition and charms of the "fee fai fo fum" of the witch-doctor, and through the ignorance

and dirt of untrained men and women, this question of the relation of three high types of service to the underlying motive from which they spring should be given careful consideration. Direct evangelism is being curtailed in practically every Mission, and this brings to the fore the question as to whether it is not the time to face the problem squarely and honestly. Conditions indicate that the church is not willing to support the amount of work that has been undertaken in their Missions. If this serves to indicate the mind of the Master—and it is admitted that it may not—then the emphasis has been placed on wrong phases of service. But this seems patent. For the incontrovertible fact is that from the time of Christ, up to the present, it has been the simple preaching of the ideal of Jesus that has brought forth among the great Christian nations the spirit which has produced the thought and will for social service, of which medical philanthropy, education, and related benefactions are a part. And it also stands to reason that the same result will follow in Assam, if the same method is used. It is true that there are aids, but there is no substitute under heaven for the simple preaching of salvation through the Christ.

VI

"FAILED B. A.'S"

The nations which are accustomed to the use of knives, forks, and spoons in eating their food, seldom stop to think that the rajahs and kings of old ate with their fingers! Such tools are indeed very modern; indeed by many millions of people they are regarded as dirty, the very thought of putting into their mouth the same instrument which has been used by another person in eating is offensive! So it is also true in regard to the outstanding leaders of the centuries just gone by; according to modern standards their education as well as their culture would be classed as deficient. In Assam, and in fact in the whole of India, even as recently as one hundred years ago, there was absolutely no kind of system of education. There were no schools, except the little teaching done by the Brahmins in their own homes; and it is not improbable that the majority of the members of the royal households, often including the rajahs themselves, could neither read or write.

But there was education, though not in the modern sense of the term. The young men of the best families were taught the use of the various weapons of war and of the chase. Etiquette, the accepted ideals of chivalry, and a certain amount of historical lore, particularly as it related to their own families, were taught to the boys—not the girls! Among the priestly families only was there any kind of serious study, and this consisted in reading and memorizing parts of the scriptures and the ritual of

worship. But the priests were the real intelligentsia, and, as in all nations, were very jealous of their prerogatives.

When the Mohammedans invaded Assam they brought with them the idea of an education which was available for all boys, without regard to family or condition—but again not for girls or women! To a large extent it consisted in learning to read Arabic, which was to them all a foreign language, and memorizing portions of the Koran and of the book of tradition and comment. There was a measure of other teaching, a little mathematics and history, but these were entirely secondary in their system. Still on account of its democracy, it was a great advance over the conservatism of the Brahmins, but as the Mohammedans were not able to hold Assam long enough to establish either their government or their culture it had no lasting effect on the general population of the valley.

Missionaries were the first to advocate the idea of education for all classes and races. As in all other lands, the first thing they did was to commence the preparation of a Christian literature. But when they found that there were not sufficient readers to use it their thoughts turned to schools. Their primary purpose was to enable people to read the Bible which was inevitably the first book to be translated. In this way modern education was introduced into Assam. The Government set up schools later, but with a different purpose. A certain number of educated subordinate officers were necessary to assist in the administration of the land and there was no source of supply, and as the Mission schools were not able to provide them Government started the system of education which has developed along lines never dreamed of by those who established the first schools. Yet on account of the prominent part which the Missions took in this, education was

for many years associated with Christianity in the minds of the people.

The desire that the schools might be a means of making converts among the non-Christians who attended them was as strong as the desire that the children of Christians might be educated. With the passing of time and the necessity of making the courses in all schools conform to the standards of Government, this ideal has to a large extent disappeared. It was formerly expected by non-Christian parents that if their children went to Christian schools an effort would be made to convert them. Nowadays this contingency seldom enters their minds, for conversion among the students of Mission schools and colleges is rare. Mission schools are often preferred because of their high ideals and better discipline, but it is by means of the indirect influence only of the missionaries who are in charge of them that they are making an impact on the thinking of India today.

Formerly, becoming a Christian raised a man in the social scale and implied that he had had the advantage of some kind of an education. This was often abused; even non-Christians adopted European names and passed themselves off as Christians in order to obtain positions or some other selfish advantage. An amusing illustration of this thought and attitude is related in "*The Bishop's Conversion.*" The Bishop was an American "doing" India. One day he was approached by an Indian who said:

"Sir, I am a Christian."

Looking at his clothes—a dirty topi, dirty coat, dirty and baggy trousers, and his shoes, which combined with the rest showed a run-down-at-the-heel character, the Bishop asked:

"Well, and how do you prove that you are a Christian?"

"Why, Sir," was the astonishing answer, "I drink whisky, I wear pants, and I say damn!"

The fact is that for many years the proportion of literate persons in the population of all India was much higher among Christians than among any other community. The opportunities for education, and the implied advantage of an improved social status, led very many to profess conversion. Time has changed this also. Government schools grew in quantity and in quality, and with the increase in the number of educated men there was less opportunity for Christians unless their training and ability at least equaled that of Hindus and Mohammedans. It has come to pass that the non-Christian has the preference, if his coreligionist has power to influence the decision.

The number of men graduated from all the schools is now so great that there is a glut in the market. Men with B. A., M. A., and similar degrees which indicate scholarship and training, compete for office jobs which pay less wages than what is earned by illiterate motor-car drivers! Still, many of them would rather starve than "degrade" themselves by doing manual labor—and the fact is that some of them do go hungry! But such is the value placed on education by this class that they will persist in making known their qualifications even though they have failed to pass the examinations. Many an application for a position is signed "Failed Matric." This means that the bearer failed to pass his high-school examinations! (And it is to be remembered that the passing grade is *thirty-three* per cent.!) "Failed B. A." and "Failed M. A." are correspondingly common.

THE NAPIT

He Is Not Only the Barber but Also the Village News-carrier, Match-maker, etc.

The quality of the education which produces such brilliance is typified by a letter sent in answer to an advertisement for a clerk. It was as follows:

MAYAGAN, BOMBAY.

One stamps for half the anna enklosed for the honoured reply.

MOST HONOURED SIR,

Understanding that there are several hands wanted in your honours dept. I beg to offer my hands.

As to my adjustiments I peared for the metrikulation examination at Oty, but failed, reason for which I will deskribe, to begin with my writing was illigible this was due to clemit reason for I having come from a worm to a cold clemit found my fingers stiff and very disobedient to my wishes. Further I had received a grate sohk to my mental sistern in the shape of the death of my only fond brother beside, most honoured sir, I beg to state that I am in very uncomfortable circumferences being the soul support of my brothers seven issue konsisting of three adults and four adultresses, the latter being the bam of my existence oing to my having to support two of my own wifes as well as their issue which by God's misfortune the femenene gendre predominates.

If by wonderful good fortune the few humbel lines meet with your benine kindness and favourable turn of mind the poor menial shall ever pray for the long life of yourself and your honours posthumus olive branches.

I am your honors moast dutiful servant

.....

While it would be entirely unfair and untrue to state that the result of education in all schools is all of this type, yet the very low standards as indicated by the passing grades do not tend to produce high-quality men. It is to be noted also that the schools conducted by Missions are for the most part under Government rules, and the same type of men are turned out. The requirement, to be

able to answer one-third of the examination questions, sets a very low ideal. Imagine a surgeon knowing how to do but one-third of a brain operation! Think of the driver of an express train knowing the functions of but one in three of the levers and switches which control the engine he is driving! Yet, to pass a high-school or college examination in India, correct answers to one out of three questions, one-third of those asked in regard to subjects just completed, is sufficient to rubber-stamp a student as satisfactory to the school authorities in India!

In addition to this there is a general lack of fundamental morality among Indian students. Cramming, tutors, "ponies," stolen examination papers—anything in the world in order to pass, is the general attitude. Nor is this true for the smaller institutions only. It is but a very few years since a horrible scandal arose in the great Calcutta University. Thousands of students had obtained copies of the questions many days before the examinations; but this is not uncommon, it happened that they were caught that time!

The reason for making such a statement is not with any desire to disparage the good qualities of many fine students, but to make known actual conditions which cry to heaven for a remedy; and to emphasize the fact that the panacea for curing diseased ideals is not secular education.

The Padri was talking recently with the head master of one of the largest high schools in the valley. He was a Hindu. In discussing the difficulties he was meeting, he said:

"Sir, I am greatly distressed over the condition of my school. It is impossible to have honest work done. Do you know I do not believe that there is *one* boy among all

the five hundred in the school who is basically honest! There is no sense of right among them."

"Why do you not try severe discipline? Is there not a committee of citizens to help you in flagrant cases?" asked the Padri.

"Ah," said he, "the difficulty is with the parents as much as with the boys! The committee itself is made up of the fathers of boys, or their relatives, or else their friends. If I catch any cheating, or if discipline is necessary for any other reason, all the influence of the committee, or at least a part of it, will be used to prevent the needed punishment. A regular campaign of lies is being carried on against me now because I had to whip one boy who is almost incorrigible! If I should correct all who need it my life would not be safe. I would fear that they would stone me some night, or set my house on fire. You know that is a common means of revenge."

"Is it not true, as I was saying to you," asked the Padri, "that the conversion of the moral outlook of the people is required? The character which the boys reveal is the result of their training at home. Unless the spiritual outlook of the entire people is altered we can expect no change in the attitude of the children. And this is the reason that we are preaching Jesus Christ; we know that faith in him gives a new outlook, a real, new birth."

"Did you know," said the head master, "that I have been agitating for the teaching of religion in the Government schools? I believe that until religion controls character there can be no real advance in India."

"No, I had not known of your attitude. I thoroughly agree with you for you touch the heart of the matter," answered the Padri, "still, there are some very practical difficulties in the way. No one system of religion or moral

precepts could be taught without giving offense to some one of the many communities. If only the ideals and teachings of Jesus could be accepted they would alter the entire outlook of the whole people."

A report of a Government Educational Commission, which recently made a study of conditions of schools in Assam, recognized the need for a moral change in the outlook of students. They even recommended that some kind of religious teaching be introduced as soon as possible. But while this public statement in regard to the condition is excellent because it points to the fact that the evil is recognized, yet there is no possible system that will be acceptable to any two of the great religious communities of India.

All these things are indications of the tendency and result of the system of education introduced by the British. The main purpose was to provide men to supply a specific need. This required training was along classical, as distinct from scientific, lines; hence the result has been a glut of men with special training and not enough positions for them to fill. This difficulty is now pressing for some solution. In fact it is the basic reason for a large part of the agitation of recent years.

A visitor to a large high school was addressing the boys. He asked them, "What work do you hope to obtain when you leave school?"

There were more than four hundred boys present, and he avers that every one of them shouted, "Government post!"

This has been the incentive of tens of thousands of young men. Positions not being available, and the graduates feeling that manual work is degrading, they have sought any kind of what would be termed "white-collar" jobs

and have been willing to accept almost any pay that would save them from physical exertion. A resultant from this condition which is almost incomprehensible to white men, is that these measurably educated men blame the Government for their plight! When this is considered in connection with the fact that in addition to an opportunity for any kind of education, all their peace, prosperity, and advancement is the result of the beneficial rule of the British, the lack of any kind of gratitude impresses Westerners as astonishing. This was strikingly illustrated during the late war. When volunteers were called for, almost none could be found among the plains peoples of eastern India. Among sixty million Bengalis it was impossible to raise one single regiment! There was not one company of Assamese! It is true that a few clerks and men connected with offices that were far from the danger zone, did go, but even these were very few. It is worthy of note that hillmen, and in particular the Christians among them, were in many instances very willing to volunteer for service anywhere.

A fact worthy of note also is that it is among the large body of somewhat educated young men that the material for the anarchistic movements of recent years has been found. They have made the bombs, killed the officers, incited the coolies to strike, and in general have been the leaders of the destructive propaganda that is at present ruining India. The attitude that manual labor is debasing and the consequent difficulties which beset the educated classes was shown in an amusing way one evening, when the Padri and the Memsahib were walking home from the bazaar. They met Bholonath Babu, one of the oldest residents of Sibsagar, going toward the market. He is wealthy and respected by many in the community. Seeing

the Padri carrying several small parcels under his arm, he stopped and said, with a smile:

"Aha! I see that you too have to carry your things."

"Why? What? Oh, you mean these little parcels! Why, it had never occurred to me that I was doing anything unusual! In America we have practically no servants and do our own work, and carrying articles is a natural thing for us to do."

"Well, we have to carry things too, nowadays," said Bholonath. "It was never like this before. In years gone by I could get all the servants I desired for five rupees a month, or less, and now I have to pay a mere coolie fifteen to twenty! Even at that it is hard to get them. And in spite of this, my son, who has his M. A., cannot get a job at that wage in a position he could accept as a gentleman, and sits idly at home, and I feed him!"

The same condition was emphasized in a rather interesting way, by the high priest of one of the great temples on the bank of Sib Singh's tank. The other evening when the Padri was going to town to do the usual evangelistic work, he saw the old gentleman in the compound of the temple using a large knife to cut down the jungle. He was also cleaning up the place. Never in all his years in India had he seen a Brahmin in such a high position do such menial work. Being a good friend, he stopped and called to him:

"You are making the place look nice."

"Ah!" exploded the old man, "never in all my sixty years have I had to do such low work! Listen to that crowd over there shouting about that football game! Six or seven of my sons and grandsons are there, and they will play and howl till dark and let me do the work of a coolie!

"Times have changed. I have twenty-five mouths to feed, and no help. Several of the boys have passed from high school, but they can obtain no employment which is worthy of the family. They simply sit and eat!"

"But, *Takurji* [Priest]," said the Padri, rather amused at his justifiable wrath, "we must not be discouraged. Times are bad enough, it is true, but they might be worse. Do you know that the older generation has always spoken thus of the younger one during all the ages of the past? In the land of Egypt a large stone was found, having an inscription on it that the ancient scholar had carved there some three thousand years before Christ, 'The ancient times were better than these!'

"Young people in his time produced succeeding generations from which we of modern times have developed, and we are normal men—at least in our own eyes! But the funny part of it all is that we tend to regard the rising generation as the old Egyptian considered those who were young in his day! But they'll pull through and be as good as we are, I'm sure. But, *Takurji,* as I have said to you before, why not accept the teachings of Jesus and have the personal help of his Spirit in trying to make things better?"

"Ah, yes, Padri Sahib," answered the Brahmin, "the teachings of Jesus are good, but I have twenty-five members in my family to feed!"

Thinking men, in addition to the Educational Department, have come to realize that the system of education in vogue is not satisfactory. Many plans have been talked of, and one or two efforts have been made to introduce some form of practical training, but nothing has succeeded as yet. The fact is that the great drawback is in the outlook of the people. The very climate tends to make phys-

ical effort distasteful, and there is as yet no great middle class in which comfort and toil are comparatively equal; the general condition of the peoples of India is either extreme poverty or excessive wealth.

In a land where the vast majority of the people live by farming the logical plan for the improvement of the condition of the masses would seem to indicate agricultural schools. A number of years ago several of these institutions were opened. The purpose was twofold: First, a number of young men were to be trained as teachers, and they in turn would open other schools as the scheme developed; the second thought in mind was that young men, the sons of farmers, or others if they would, might be trained in scientific methods. But the result of this effort, up to the present, has been practically nil. One after the other of the schools have been closed because the Government jobs were filled. Boys would not attend school to learn how to farm, they were not willing to put their hands to the plow, even if it were a modern and scientific tool. The spirit among the Hindu population is easily understood. It is one of the results of the caste system. In order to retain their hold on king and commons, the Brahmins have taught through the ages past that the gods created four classes of men: First—of course—the Brahmin; next, the warrior; next to him, the merchant; and at the very bottom, the farmer and laborer! With such teaching dinned into their ears through the years it is no wonder that young men who have begun to think, hesitate to remain in a state which is considered as degraded by their own society.

Various plans for introducing some kind of practical training into the ordinary curriculum are being considered, but until there is a radical change in the attitude of the

people themselves none of these can really succeed. The difficulty is that the entire modern educational system in India has been superimposed from without, and from above, as it were. It has not grown up out of, nor from a demand and desire of, the people whom it is supposed to benefit. Until any system, be it education, government, or religion, which affects any people or nation, becomes the expression of the will of the majority, it can never succeed in becoming a vital factor in that society. Anything foreign to a nation bears a stigma until such a time as custom or usage sanctions its adoption. This has not as yet come to pass in regard to the present system of education in India. Should the British Government withdraw from the country, the plans and methods—in fact, the entire system—would not endure one year from the date the last officer would sail from its shores. There is no doubt that some effort would be made, and that in time a more or less satisfactory system would evolve from the wreck; but whatever would come forth would be more acceptable to the people of the land—not because it would necessarily be better, but because it would be their own!

Great medical schools and hospitals have been established by Government and have attracted large numbers of young men. In fact, this phase of education has thus far been the most practical of all the efforts that have been made to help educate the people. It has resulted in a glut of trained men who cannot obtain jobs under Government. This service is very popular because it implies a pension after a certain period of work, but the openings are limited. In connection with this factor is the unwillingness of the young men who pass from the schools to go out into the villages and set up for themselves. They are now congregated in the cities or large towns where

life offers more comfort, but as there is not enough work to support them in these centers they will be forced to go out among the people, in the course of time.

Although the opportunities for boys to obtain an education have been available all through India and even up to the borders of the wild head-hunting areas for many years, and though the number of pupils has increased by leaps and bounds, yet these same advantages were not offered to girls. It is within the past twenty years only that they have had even a reasonable chance—but they are making up for lost time now!

Not so many years ago a young lady said to a well-to-do Bengali father:

"We have a nice little girls' school near where I live. Why don't you send your daughters so that they can learn to read and write? We teach them to sew too."

"Huh!" snorted the gentleman, "I don't send my cows to school! Why send girls?"

In contrast with this attitude, the present-day spirit is exemplified by the thousands of girls' schools all over the land. As there is little difference in the process all through India, general statements hold true for much of it, though some sections have been later and more backward in their development. Assam is of the latter type; but the situation in regard to "female education," as it is officially termed, is well illustrated by the efforts of the Mohammedan community. According to the teaching of their religion, women have, if possible, a lower place in the scale than has the Hindu wife, mother, or daughter. (The holy books describe her as the curse to man, and exalt the cow as a holy animal!) But on a sand island in the Brahmaputra River, where temporary villages of Mohammedan immigrants have sprung up, in spite of the

yearly floods which sweep over the location, and which may carry the entire place away any rainy season, even in the face of such danger they have established not only a religious school for their boys—that is the expected thing—but they have another one for their girls!

Fifty years ago, aside from the Mission schools, there was no place in all India where girls could obtain an education. In fact there was no other organization in any way interested, and, having the lead in this phase of development Missions could have controlled the culture of the womanhood of the entire land if they had undertaken the work in any adequate way. The same is true in regard to the education of boys. If this phase of socio-religious service is a worthy part of the effort of the Christian church for India, it should have been taken seriously, but from the beginning to the present, considering the small amount of time and money invested in the effort, in comparison with the enormous undertaking if the people concerned are to be reached, the only conclusion that can be reached is that the Missions have not even toyed with the proposition seriously; and, as a result, they have entirely lost their opportunity for leadership in education in all India.

A majority of the friends of Missions have either incorrect information, or none at all, in regard to the condition of education as well as in regard to medical work done by the societies. Very few have any knowledge of the immense amount of money and effort that the Government is putting into secular education. Missionaries working in areas like Assam will have their hearts wrapped up in the institution that is connected with their own field, such as the Christian high school at Jorhat. This is the only school of its type for the entire Brah-

maputra valley, and for a large part of the neighboring hills; and in this area there are perhaps five millions of people! But—and here is where the difficulty for folks in another land arises—they either have not the time, or else forget to mention the fact that there are at least twenty other high schools in the same area which are larger, more adequately equipped and which do work equal in quality, if not better, than the Jorhat school. The one fact that makes the latter institution stand out from the others is that it is a Christian school. And the only one of this type for the area at that! Still another fact should be taken into the consideration, viz., the entire Christian community in which this school serves will not produce enough boys with proper qualifications, to make full use of the existing equipment for many years to come!

When it is realized that among the six hundred thousand boys of school age in this portion of the frontier province of Assam (and conditions in the greater part of India are similar, only much, much better in many parts), that for this number of boys there are over two thousand five hundred educational institutions, including three colleges; and that there are nearly ten thousand teachers, whose number has increased by twenty per cent. in the last decade; when these truths are comprehended it serves to emphasize the astounding effort that is being made by the Government. There are about one hundred and twenty thousand of the boys who are of school age, studying in these institutions. Comparing these facts with the information that many have had that there was but one school only in all this area, it helps in the realization that conditions are entirely different from what they were when Mission work commenced, or from what they were even less than a generation ago.

Information in regard to work for girls has been similar in character and quantity to that which has been possessed relating to the education of boys. The total number of girls in schools of any kind is much less than that of boys, but while the number of literate men has increased less than twenty per cent. in the last ten years, the number of literate women has increased *fifty per cent.!* At this rate it will require but a few decades till the sexes are equally educated.

In noting that there is now little need for Missions to carry on secular education because the Government is doing the job the fact that almost half of the money sent to the Mission fields is used in secular education, should be taken into account. Two conclusions can be drawn from this, either that the policy is wrong, or else that the amount devoted to educational work is entirely inadequate, i. e., if any type of education, aside from the strictly religious, is a part of the duty of Missions. If general instruction in the arts and sciences is a worthy and necessary part of missionary effort, it is essential that this be undertaken seriously even now, though it is really very late in the day. The present amount of Mission education, compared with what might be done, is infinitesimal; compared with the amount that Government is doing in all parts of India, it is paltry. Many in the home churches who are keen supporters of missionary work are disinclined to have their contributions used for the support of secular education in India because they feel that this is the duty of the government of the land. While there has always been a close connection between the church and education it is recognized that the result has not been to increase righteousness. Education and religiousness have never been synonymous. Those who really know this field realize

that the direct approach through simple preaching of the ideals of Christ is easier, more acceptable, less expensive, and the only method that has produced fruit in the shape of a Christian community. Direct evangelism is not only the logical plan now, but, as we see from the narrative of the Gospels and the Acts, it was the method used by Christ and the apostles.

It is true that in some places churches have grown out of schools. The work in the Garo Hills is an illustration of this. Practically all the churches, which now have a membership of over ten thousand, have developed in villages to which a Christian teacher was sent to open a lower primary school. In such cases the church has not been the result of the reading, writing, and arithmetic taught to the smaller children of the village, but of the preaching of the teacher who had had his instructions to make this his chief effort.

Education in all its forms has been very backward in the Assam Mission. Nearly fifty years ago a Commission from the States visited the fields of the Society and ordered the closing of all such work as not being a part of the command of Christ. While the missionaries could not bring themselves to obey the fiat completely, yet the result was that there remained practically no means of training Christian leaders. In fact, there is not to this day one solitary, ordained Indian college graduate in the Mission!

Rev. S. A. D. Boggs was sent to Assam thirty-seven years ago for the purpose of founding a Bible School that could be developed into a seminary; but up to even ten years ago he found that the men who were willing to come to study theology did not have enough ordinary education to enable them to read their own language in-

telligently, to say nothing of Greek or Hebrew! He realized the need of a system of Christian education that would have as its one ideal, from the lowest primary school through all the higher grades, the production of trained Christian leaders; and that the consummation of this entire structure should be in the seminary. The plan as formulated and adopted for the area is summarized as follows: A village school in every Christian community, a Middle English school in every Mission station, a central institution including high-school, industrial, and agricultural features in Jorhat; all of these leading up to and culminating in a theological seminary. Only a portion of the financial support of this system was expected from the Mission. Taxes paid for education by the Christians would provide for the contributions from Government which would be given in aid of all but the distinctively religious instruction. The villagers would erect their own buildings—this is the general practise today—and the Associations would be expected to raise money to help support the central schools; in this way it was hoped that but a small portion of the expense would fall on the home churches . . . but that was the ideal.

When Boggs arrived at Jorhat to begin work on the first building he found that the place was a burning-ground, and that it was considered to be full of the ghosts of the departed and of the evil spirits which enjoyed such localities! No Indian ever crossed the sluggish stream that bordered the plot, after dark. But curious eyes watched the missionary. They saw him moving about at night, carrying a lantern so as to see any wandering cobras or kraits, but showing no evidence of fear; and what was more, being entirely unharmed by the spooks; and to this day he bears the reputation of "devil-chaser" among the

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local villagers! A very old, toothless Hindu said to him one day:

"Sir, since you have come to Jorhat, the evil spirits have fled from this place. We now have no fear. Why, even I who have formerly seen them with my own eyes, have been so reassured by your work that I am now bold to cross the place at night!"

It required almost twenty years of work till the Bible School could be formally opened! In order to have boys that were able to read intelligently Boggs started department after department of the other sections of the general institution, which he would turn over to other missionaries to conduct as soon as they were established; but he has been the only one who has had the ability or the vision to be able to stand the gaff for these twenty years. Numbers of men have come and gone, but the school, with its recently opened Bible Department, stands as a monument to the patient, persistent endeavor of one man.

While it is recognized that secular education is a function of Government—and the British in India have assumed the burden—yet there is one phase of the problem which the church must solve, and this is the religious care of pupils who may be studying in institutions in which there can be no theological instruction of any kind. The hope of a wide-spread system of Mission schools which would control the education of the entire land has disappeared, but the need of the Christian boys has remained. The solution of this phase of the problem has been found in establishing hostels on the Mission compounds. These being in charge of the local churches or missionaries, the religious needs of the students can be provided for. This is one project in which it is very easy to interest the people themselves. Even non-Christians in many places establish

schools and contribute to the building of hostels for their own boys.

An important factor which enters into this problem of assisting the people of a foreign land in education of any type, be it religious or secular, is the type of buildings that are considered necessary by the two parties concerned. When the people put up houses they erect such as are within their community means. These will usually be somewhat better than their own homes, but they are such as they will be able to keep up. When Missions have established schools the structures have been permanent. Often they are beautiful. But one fact emerges; they are so large that the expense of upkeep will be more than the Christian community can possibly meet for many years to come. This implies, of course, that it is the definite desire and policy of foreign-mission organizations finally to turn over to the indigenous community the work and also the property involved. With the awakening of social consciousness the time is not far distant when the community will compel this action if it is not taken voluntarily. The point in the thought is this; Missions should have self-restraint and should build such structures only as it will be possible for the Indian church to maintain. If the advice of such Christian organizations as are in existence should be asked, many mistakes and much expense could probably be avoided.

In view of the very evident reluctance of the churches in America and England to shoulder the burden of secular education, although it is a worthy piece of social service;

And, taking into consideration the fact that the Government, and to an increasing extent the people themselves, are taking more and more adequate steps to provide general education for all classes and for both sexes;

And also, giving real weight to the fact that as agencies for spreading the knowledge of Christ, schools have practically ceased to have value in this fundamental work of Missions;

And then taking into consideration the fact that the simple, elementary evangelistic method—preaching—has been the means above all others whereby the Christian community in the world has been brought forth, and that these commendable phases of Christian philanthropy have developed in the world church only after the basic work has been done;

And that in addition to this the simple, successful method is very much less expensive;

Taking all these factors into consideration it would seem that the time has come when the whole problem should be reviewed. The cost should be counted. The methods which have been tried should be weighed, and those which have not advanced the Kingdom of Jesus Christ should be discarded. Evangelism, by which is meant the direct preaching of the ideal of Jesus, has been starved in order that great institutions might be built up and supported. Reference to the budget of any of the great Mission organizations confirm this. If the facts are faced with Christian courage and vision, and the wisdom of the Master, the foolishness of preaching, given its opportunity and place, it will inevitably raise up a community which will care for its own philanthropies in a manner more satisfactory to itself than any foreign organization can do.

But it is a far cry from the times when there was no system of education of any kind available for the peoples of Assam, to the present when it is available to millions. The educated lawyers and officials of Government who in many instances conduct and judge cases in which descen-

dants of Rajah Sib Singh and his family are concerned belong to the castes which were not permitted to walk on the king's highway in those days. Death was the penalty to fishermen, goldsmiths, and several other classes if they were caught walking on the road! And yet it has not been a long time; it is but one hundred years since the cruel Burmans were expelled from the land and the present modern administration begun! And the change in habits and customs of the people in this short period has been more astonishing. But we will permit the next chapter to tell this story.

VII

FROM PALKEE TO PACKARD

Rajah Rudra Singh, father of Sib Singh, was not satisfied. With the growth of his power, wealth, and honor his ideas in regard to the comforts which a king should enjoy had expanded also. The old buildings seemed antiquated. An up-to-date ruler should have the last word in both comfort and luxury! Had not the travelers who had just returned from their visit to the great cities of the Bengalis, and to the capital of the great Mohammedan Badshas, a journey of many moons to the west, told him of the wonderful palaces and even tombs, which gleamed like the white of the snow on the top of the distant mountains! And, behold, the ruler of the great land of Assam—than whom there was no greater—living in one little brick house and all his other royal buildings of timber and straw!

During the rains mosquitoes swarmed in millions. Fevers, and many other diseases too, often interfered with pleasure and business. Then again the brick palace was too small for the different wives and their numerous families and relations, bickerings between women and children took the joy out of life. It would never do! The honor of the realm required that things be brought up to date!

Taking into consideration the times, and the standards of living which prevailed at that period, Gahrgao, the capital of Assam, was not really uncomfortable. It was spread over a large area with many groves of trees and

bamboos about it, and the fortifications were very strong. The luxury of the palace and the great reception hall made even sophisticated visitors marvel.

When Mir Jumlah, the leader of the Mohammedan invasion into Assam, in the year 1662, brought his armies up the Brahmaputra from Bengal, a scribe who was his personal secretary and also the historian of the expedition, accompanied him. His writings are among the earliest trustworthy records which exist and throw much light on conditions as he found them. His description of the Ahom capital is very interesting. He wrote:

The town of Gahrgao has four gates built of stone and mortar. The distance of each from the palace of the Rajah is three *kos* (six miles). A well-raised, broad, and very solid road or embankment has been made for traffic, and round about the town, instead of fortifications, there are circular bushes of bamboo, about two *kos* in diameter.

But the town is not like other towns; the huts of the inhabitants being within the bamboo bushes near the embankment. Each man has his own garden and field before his own house so that the one side of the field touches the embankment and the other the house. Near the Rajah's palace, on both sides of the Dikku River, are large houses. The bazaar road is narrow and is occupied by *pan*-sellers only. Eatables are not sold as in our markets; but each man keeps in his own house stores for a year, and no one either buys or sells.

The town looks large, being a cluster of several villages. Round about the palace an embankment has been thrown up, the top of which is fortified by a bamboo palisade, instead of walls, and along the sides of it a ditch runs, the depth of which exceeds a man's height. It is always full of water. The circumference exceeds two miles. Inside are high and spacious buildings.

The audience-hall of the Rajah, which is called *solang,* is one hundred and twenty cubits in length, and thirty in width. It has sixty-six pillars, each about four cubits in circumference. The pillars, though so large, are quite smooth, so that at first

glance you would take them to be planed. The ornaments and curiosities, with which the whole woodwork of the house is filled, defy description; nowhere in the whole inhabited world will you find a house equal to it in strength, ornamentation, and pictures. The sides of this palace are embellished by extraordinary wooden trellis work. Inside there are large brass mirrors, highly polished, and if the sun shines on one of them the eyes of the bystanders are perfectly dazzled. Twelve thousand workmen are said to have erected the building in the course of one year.

At the end of the hall, rings are fastened on four pillars opposite to each other, each pillar having nine rings. When the Rajah takes his seat in the hall, they put a dais in the middle of the four pillars, and nine canopies of various stuffs are fastened above it to the rings. The Rajah sits on the dais below the canopies, whereupon the drummers beat their drums and gongs. . .

There are other houses in Gahrgao, strong, very long, and spacious, full of fine mats, which must be seen to be appreciated. But alas, unless the kingdom be annexed to His Majesty's domains (the Mohammedan Empire) not even an infidel could see all the fine things without falling into the misfortunes to which we fell. . . Indeed it is a pleasant place. As the soil of the country is very damp, the people do not live on the floor, but on a *machan,* which is the name for a raised floor.

Ideas as to comfort have varied during the ages. The existing ruins of the brick palaces at both Gahrgao, and the later one at Rungpur (Sibsagar), would seem to indicate that in spite of the intense heat and humidity, even the wealthy of former years preferred small rooms, with mere holes for windows in the immensely thick walls. But the real reason for the depth of the walls and the smallness of the openings was on account of the method of building masonry in those days. The Ahoms were a crude people recently come from the jungles of the hills of upper Burmah. The arts and sciences of those times had not found their way into the wildness of their kingdom. Neither then nor to the present has the nation

produced one outstanding architect or artist. The masons who erected the great temples and palaces were imported from Bengal, and this is the reason that the type of construction is similar to that found in the other parts of eastern India.

These workmen used the principle of the self-centering arch in their masonry buildings. In drawing in the wall at the top of an opening to form the arch, no support or false work was required, but this necessitated very thick walls to uphold the weight as each course of brick or stone was extended out farther than the previous one, till they would meet at the top of the opening. But as no beams were used for the ceilings of the rooms, the same type of arch construction being used, the halls and chambers were comparatively small, and the walls from six to eight feet in thickness.

But the brick structures which remain are not a real indication of the luxuries and comforts of the early Ahoms. All buildings except the central portion of the palaces, and the great temples, were constructed of wood, bamboo, and thatch. Such houses were of all sizes, and having thick roofs made of grass, were very comfortable and well suited to the climate. The reason that none of the royal halls and buildings of this kind remain is on account of the perishable nature of the materials of which they were built. The walls and roof of a thatched house must be renewed after five or six years at the most. The dampness of the soil and climate rots the posts, but worse than this, white ants eat anything that belongs to the vegetable kingdom, excepting a very few kinds of timber that are too hard or which contain chemicals that are distasteful to them. But in addition to this, fire is the great enemy of such buildings. When the Burmese, in particu-

lar, ravished the land, very many of these great houses, and as often as not the entire town with them, were burned just for the fun of seeing a big fire! In this way all the beautiful articles which rajahs and nobles had collected, along with their histories and family records, were destroyed.

Little that is old remains in Assam, and except for the Ancient Monuments Act which was enacted by the Government during the time when Lord Curzon was Viceroy, this also would have been doomed. But the march of progress and an echo of the spirit of modern aggression having reached even India, many of the old landmarks are disappearing to make room for modern improvements. This is seen particularly in the cities, where great avenues are being cut through the thickest of the slum areas; but they also push forward roughshod over reminders of the beauty and leisure of the past.

Just recently one of the last of the "elephant porticos" in the heart of the business part of the town, was dismantled. As an indication of the standard of life in the time of the Old John Company, from which trading organization the land was taken over by the Crown, and as an evidence of the passing of the ancient standards in this the most conservative land on the surface of the earth, this is worthy of remark. As there were few roads in those days—the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—the only satisfactory means of transport was by means of elephants. True, the *palkee* was available but it was most uncomfortable. It was a mere box, long enough to permit a full-grown man to half lie down, half sit up. Four bearers carried it by means of a pole attached to each end, but, for any who could afford the expense, elephants were the ideal means of transport. In Assam the rajahs kept

herds of these animals, often more than a thousand at one time. In a city no one could keep such numbers; but there the elephant was what the motor-car is today; with one of the noble animals, equipped with gay cloth, tiger-skin drapery, and a beautiful, gilded *howdah,* a nabob of the time would be as proud of his turnout as any modern plutocrat is of his Rolls-Royce. But it was on account of the height of the elephants, especially when they were carrying *howdahs,* that the porticos were built. They were practically two stories high, and extended out from the entrance of the house similar to the covering over the modern driveway, and for exactly the same reason—so that the conveyance could be entered or left under shelter from the sun and rain. A modern car requires but seven feet headroom at the most; an elephant and *howdah* would need up to sixteen feet! But with changing times the badge of respectability and the mark of prosperity has altered—and "elephant porticos" have disappeared.

While the great majority of the common people of Assam still live in the same kind of bamboo-reed-grass huts as were used in the time of the rajahs, yet in many places, even a hundred miles back in the mountains where head-hunting flourished a generation ago, huts having roofs of galvanized iron, made in Germany most likely, stand out in their ugliness among the soft thatch of the other houses. The bungalows and factories of the early white men who came into the valley, were often built without the use of a single nail. Wooden pins, cane, or jungle vines were used to bind them together. But this is all changed. Steel beams make the framework of practically all modern buildings. The reason for the use of this material in preference to brick or stone is on account of the many earthquakes to which the land is subject.

A typical planter's bungalow not far from Sibsagar is built on the bank of one of the tanks dug by the Ahoms almost three hundred years ago. It is one hundred feet long and thirty-five feet wide. On the front side overlooking the artificial lake, a large veranda twenty by thirty feet projects from the house on the same level as the upper floor. The lower story is level with the ground in the front, but cemented and finished, and divided into offices, bedrooms, billiard, and storerooms. The lower space under the veranda is used for guests' motor-cars. It easily accommodates four of them, and is the modern substitute for the elephant porticos of old. From this space the main stairway leads to the upper veranda which is in constant use in the summer as a place for sitting in the evenings, and also for serving afternoon tea.

The upper story of the house contains two bedrooms, the smaller one twenty feet square by fourteen feet high, the other one five feet longer. There are separate bath- and dressing-rooms connected to each bedroom in the bungalow. The walls are all paneled, the plastered portions being tinted differently for each room. Within recent years electric light has been installed for all the buildings connected with the factory and the dwelling-houses, adding immensely to the comfort of life in a very trying climate. When modern sanitation and mechanical refrigeration are installed—and arrangements are being made for both—nothing more could be asked or desired to make a home in the tropics comfortable. In reality it can be classed as luxurious. This is a fairly typical example of the kind of bungalows that planters have in most parts of Assam. The older structures are rapidly disappearing.

While it is true that a planter's life is strenuous, if he aims to make a success of his business, yet with com-

modious houses to live in, with opportunities for tennis from two to four times each week much of the year, clubs ten or twelve miles away, motor-cars to enable him to visit neighboring planters with but a fifteen to thirty-minute drive—taking all these things into consideration there is much that relieves the tedium of the planter's life.

Missions on the frontier have not kept pace with business or with the Government in providing comfortable bungalows for their employees. Had there been better accommodation there would have been fewer tragedies of sickness and separation for the missionaries. One of the benefits of the Interchurch Movement was to make possible in a number of stations the erection of some good buildings, although it did not provide for their upkeep. The new bungalow on the bank of the great Sibsagar tank is one of the most recent of these. While it is much smaller than many of the houses erected by Government or by the large companies, it is nevertheless a comfortable home. It is eighty-seven feet in length, and the middle portion which makes it somewhat the shape of a cross, is eighty feet from the front to the back. It has all modern conveniences, including complete mosquito and insect proofing, but even the very fine-mesh wire does not keep out sandflies which are now suspected of being the carriers of the dread *kala ajar,* the black fever, which till very recently was sweeping off tens of thousands of people yearly.

The feature of having the kitchen a part of the dwelling-house is, for Europeans in Assam, very unusual. Many of the Mission bungalows have the cooking-room connected to the main building by a passageway from ten to twenty feet long, but in this Sibsagar house it is an integral part of the structure. It is the practically univer-

sal custom in India to have the kitchens, called cook-houses, separated by from fifteen to fifty feet from the houses. All cooking is done in these outbuildings, and the food is carried back and forth by servants. The reason for this practise is the theory that it is impossible to hire, or compel, Indian servants to keep any place sweet and clean: and the result of the expectation is that a majority of cook-houses are filthy! One of the first items of advice that a memsahib receives when she is going to that country is often, "Now whatever you do, if you ever want to be able to eat any of the food that is set before you, *don't* go to the cook-house." Visitors to India are practically never taken to see the places where their food is prepared! It is true that Indians lack utterly any conception of cleanliness such as is common among white people. If any article of food or clothing does not *appear* to be dirty, it is counted as clean. Prepared food that might happen to fall on the floor is wiped off so that the dirt does not show, and so long as the housewife has not seen it, it is served on the table! On account of the kitchen of the Sibsagar bungalow being as well finished as the drawing-room, and as clean, friends have brought many visitors from places as far away as Bombay to see it. It was rather amusing one day when two English ladies, who were good friends, had a discussion while they were looking it over. They were astonished that Indian servants were entirely responsible for its care. One of the ladies remarked:

"Why, it's cleaner than our kitchens in England! And to think that servants can be made to do all this!"

"No-o," said her friend, "I wouldn't say it is cleaner, but it is as clean."

But even though there is not a more complete and more

comfortable bungalow in all the Missions in Assam, yet there is scarcely a pastor on an eight-hundred-dollar salary in America who does not have a more comfortable home. But the other phase of the matter is more worthy of mention than this—even though a pastor's home in the United States or England might be somewhat less inviting, yet it is necessary to remember that outside his home there are associations, other homes, other people, a thousand conveniences, all of which add to the possible pleasures of his life; but in a frontier land like Assam there is usually very little outside their own home to which missionaries can look for diversion or pleasure. It is true that the planting community and the Government officers are friendly, but there is a difference in ideals which limits the intimacy that might be enjoyed, although there are some men and women among them who are sincere, earnest Christians. But even with a possibility of a measure of friendly association, the community is scattered, and there are months of the year when the rains render the roads impassable, and Mission families are thrown back on their own resources in their own homes for inspiration; or at least for sufficiently comfortable surroundings such as will permit them to carry on efficiently the work for which they have left the homeland.

If any worker, be he missionary or what not, is expected to do effective work it is essential that he be housed in reasonable comfort. But in Mission effort there is a factor of infinitely greater importance than this which emphasizes the necessity of providing decent homes for missionaries, for the preeminent contribution to the uplift of any people is made by example and through illustration by those who have been privileged to know higher ideals. In the case of Missions, there are the influences in

the example of a Christian home, a place in which the spirit is that of the Christ, housed and surrounded so that it has an opportunity for self-expression. Not only do the modern bungalows which are being built by the Missions tend to give scope for this, they do more; they set before Indians an example of a moderately priced house in which they can live in comfort such as the usual thatch-reed-mud building can never provide.

It is impossible to raise low standards by conforming to them, either in conduct or surroundings. If an ideal is worthy to be taken to any people it is worth being held eternally high by its advocates. This is exactly what Jesus did. He came among men as a man, he humbled *himself,* but never for a moment did he lower his ideal of perfection in spirit, or even of reasonable comfort in eating and drinking.

The outstanding example in India of an attempt to reach the lower classes by "coming down" to their level, is that of the Salvation Army. In the beginning of their work in India they gave up European or American ways of living and adopted the customs of the country—and not the higher ideal at that; they took as their model the customs and habits of the poorer part of the population. This was the logical thing to do: the vast majority of the people of India are submerged not only below the comfort line, but below the limit that marks sufficiency of both nourishment and physical protection. It is well known that millions of the people of the land subsist on but one poor meal a day. But in taking this attitude the Army failed to take into consideration one very important fact, viz., the lower classes of India live on a low plane, not because this is their ideal or wish, but on account of inescapable economic conditions. What is more they escape

into a higher plane whenever, and in any way, possible. As noted before, Christianity has been one great outlet in this process.

The Salvation Army began its work by adopting both the food and the dress of the common people. Giving up the diet to which they had been accustomed, they began to live on rice and curry. Leaving their own clothing they took to wearing the cotton cloths such as were used by the men and women of the country. For a time they did not even use the *sola* topees which are so essential to persons born and brought up in the temperate zone, when they come to India. They wore no shoes, and in fact, sought to become like Indians in every way—but not like the better class. The result was that they incurred derision from the people they wished to win, and in addition to this the heat of the sun and the unaccustomed food broke the health of their workers so fast that they could not keep their stations supplied.

The experiment proved a failure because its tendency was not in the right direction. It degraded all white people in the eyes of Indians. Nor did it serve to uplift Christianity, and a religion which does not at least offer some little benefit in this life, has a very small appeal to any class of men. In addition to this, India already possessed numerous, detached philosophies in regard to the future life and had little time for a new foreign one. As a result of the experience the Army has altered its methods. Its workers now live simply, and wear clothing which combines both the European and Indian styles. Their work and influence are growing at a very rapid rate.

In addition to their own home surroundings, the personal associations of missionaries with the people of the land, and especially with the members of their Christian

community, is probably the greatest force that could possibly be used to introduce the idealism of Christianity. Kipling wrote that "the East and West shall never meet," and in a sense he was right; a majority of Europeans have no social intercourse with the ordinary Indian, and find very little in common with even the best educated. This is understandable when intelligent Indians who know European customs, expect to dine, talk, or dance with the wives or daughters of white men, but keep their own women in close seclusion. It is not counted as "playing cricket," and fact is, it isn't! But so far as missionaries are concerned, they usually enjoy associating, in a social way, with their Christian communities; especially in their feasts and social good times. But when it is necessary, they live in any kind of a shack or shed that will enable them to be among the people who are their friends, in order to teach them personally the ideal which has called them to the land; and the Indian Christians enjoy nothing more than to have their own teachers sit on the ground with them and take part in one of their feasts.

On a tour in Mongoldai, the Padri and the Memsahib came to Borigao where Silding the Garo evangelist lived. There had been many conversions among the Kacharis in that section of the valley. There were many villages to visit about Borigao, but there was no bungalow anywhere near in which the white folks could stay, so they camped in the old schoolhouse. This building was just about to be abandoned, and for this reason no repairs had been made that season. The thatch on the roof was thin, but the members of the church had patched it a little. The walls were of split bamboo, from which most of the mud plaster had fallen off, and the sagging, sliding woven door could not be closed tightly.

VERANDA OF PLANTER'S BUNGALOW

In the evening there had been a service, but the people went home early. It was not safe to be out after dark. It happened to be the night of the month when the moon rises about an hour after the short twilight is over, and of all the hours of the night this is the blackest. The Padri and the Memsahib were sitting reading by the light of a lantern, when a horrid, grunting roar seemed to shake the very ground!

"What in the world is that, dear?" asked the Memsahib.

"Oh, only a tiger."

"Is the door shut? Where is your rifle?"

"Yes the door is closed—there is no fastener. Here is the rifle. I guess I'll put a few cartridges into it, but it's as dark as a pocket outside, and I couldn't see to shoot anything. I wish I had a good flashlight."

"Oh!" cried the Memsahib, "there it is again! It's coming just back of the house!"

"Don't worry, Old Dear," said the Padri, though the roots of his own hair tingled at the approaching roars, "it's only hunting for a dog or a goat. Very probably his mate has slipped around the village and is waiting on the other side to snaffle any foolish pup that tries to clear out of the way of his majesty."

"Where do they come from?"

"Why from that jungle across the road. The same one I was through today when I was out trying to get a shot at a jungle cock! I'm not going there tomorrow, thank you! But it is one of the large number of such jungle spots as are scattered all over this section of Mongoldai. They are abandoned village sites. Thirty years ago all this area was thickly settled. There were large towns and tens of thousands of people, but *kala ajar,* the black fever, swept

through and wiped out almost the entire population in many parts. The few people who would live always abandoned their old village sites; and it is these spots that are now grown up to thick jungle. There is another one down the road about half a mile. Listen to that! There is another tiger roaring in that one! Some country!"

Just then the first great cat let out a fearful roar, not fifty yards from the back wall of the old, rickety schoolhouse! When he ceased the silence was painful. Not a sound could be heard from man or beast, even the crickets were still. The Padri grasped his rifle, and the Mĕmsahib caught hold of his arm:

"Oh! How terrible!" she whispered.

"Don't worry, dear. It does make a fellow's hair stand on end, but that is no man-eater. They never bluster like that. This one is a sleek, well-fed bully. How I would like his skin!"

After a short time he roared again, but farther up the village path; and during the next hour, up to the time the moon rose, he could be heard sending out his challenge to the world, as he made his circuit of the entire village.

In the morning, Silding came with Suren, one of the young men of the community, and smiling, said:

"Sir, did you hear the tiger last night?"

"Did we? Is that one your special pet? Does he come often?"

"Oh, yes. He comes around almost every other night. He also goes out in the other direction, to the south, sometimes. But it is not often that he sings so much. That was your special concert!"

"Well, the Memsahib and I had plenty, and if you will pass on my compliments to him today, please say that

we enjoyed the effort, and recommend that he serenade the south side from this on!"

Both of the men enjoyed the joke, for they were so used to such animals that it seemed little else; but the young man who had come with Silding said:

"Sir, will you both come and partake of a small feast at my house this evening? I have been married for some little time, but as we did not want to go into debt, we waited till this time to have the usual repast."

"Let's go," said the Memsahib.

"Certainly! Yes, indeed, Suren, we'll never miss a chance of a good feast!"

"No, Sir, it will not be large, just what we can afford. But can you eat with your fingers? We have no knives, forks, or spoons. Maybe you would like to bring your own along."

"Tut, tut! Do you think we have been in this country all these years and have not learned to eat with our fingers? Just you watch us!"

During the day Suren and all his family were as busy as beavers. Several hundred people were expected. Four large brass kettles, holding sixty to seventy pounds each, were filled with rice and cooked over a furnace that had been dug in the ground. Curry, made of vegetables and the meat of several goats and chickens that had been killed, with an abundance of spices and especially red peppers, was prepared hours before the people were expected, as was tea also! Steeping of this brew has no terrors for spice-seasoned digestions! It was all kept hot and clean by covering it with the broad, green leaves of the *plantain,* which is the small banana tree.

About six o'clock in the evening all was ready, and as it was during the cold weather, and the days were short,

Silding and a number of the Christian men came with lanterns and clubs to conduct the white guests to the feast. The clubs, as well as the lanterns, were on account of the tigers that were about!

When they reached the place, they found the little courtyard in front of the house nicely decorated. The home was built of bamboo, reeds, and thatch, and as it measured about twelve by fourteen feet inside, it could not accommodate the guests, and as is the custom of the land, the feast was held in the little compound outside. The level space had been plastered over with thin mud early in the day, and by this time it was dry and hard, and as smooth as a floor. Bamboos upheld a temporary roof made of grass, which was necessary to keep off the very heavy dew, which begins to fall as soon as the sun sets. Gay tissue paper had been bought and cut into strips of figures and flowers that were very clever. These had been pasted on twine that was stretched across, back and forth, until it all gave to the enclosure a most gay and festive appearance—and all the decorations had cost them perhaps thirty cents! Lanterns belonging to the guests, and the large kerosene lamp, which had been borrowed from the church for the occasion, lit up the entire place brightly. The whole ensemble was indeed cheerful, and the calling and laughter of many children who had also come added to the pleasure of the happy gathering.

Mats were spread on the ground for the guests to sit on, but space was left between the rows for the convenience of those who would serve. For the Padri and the Memsahib a clean, cotton rug was laid over the mat, a mark of special respect, for *they* were the guests of honor, not Suren and his bride! They were both too

busy taking care of all the details to have time to be waited on!

When all were seated, with their legs crossed like tailors, a piece of fresh plantain leaf was placed before each one. This was the plate. A basin was then brought and each one in turn held his right hand over it while water was poured upon it to wash it—the right hand only is used for eating in India. Incidentally the right side is the place of honor. In handing any article to another person, it is a mark of great disrespect to use the left hand. Europeans who do not differentiate between the two hands, make constant mistakes when dealing with Indians; but the innate courtesy of even the common people condones this on account of the ignorance of the foreigner!

After the washing of hands, the great kettles of rice which had been well covered till this time, were carried in, and large spoons which were almost shovels, were used to ladle out the rice onto the plates. Then a waiter would pour on top of the rice, into a hollow which the diner would make in the heap, a generous spoonful of the curry. No one began to eat till all were served, but when every plate had its heap of sweet-smelling food, they stood aside and waited with bowed heads while a blessing was asked on the meal, and for the young man and his wife. The "Amen" in which all joined was of the hearty, old-fashioned kind; but they fell to immediately before the rice became cold.

Contrary to the customs of refined white folks, there is not much talking while food is being eaten in an Indian home. Nor will a man leave his food for any purpose, when once it has been placed before him. Eating as they do, from a plate placed on the floor, dust is liable to be

blown over the rice. Not only that, but there are always dogs, cats, chickens, goats, maybe cows and ducks, waiting hungrily for any food that may be left. But as Suren's feast proceeded, the polite smacking of the lips was evidence that the guests were enjoying themselves. The host and his helpers passed tea around to each guest, and they also kept bringing rice and curry as long as any one would accept it.

"A little more rice?"

"No, no. I'm full."

"Now, just a little bit," and a large spoonful would be heaped on the plate.

"Here, brother, give some more curry."

And so it proceeded till every one was entirely satisfied, and it had taken a very large amount of food to accomplish this. Then each man rose, folded up the leaf that had been his plate, and carrying it outside the courtyard, threw it away: but the dogs from all the village had collected, for they fully understood what was in process, and each remnant of food was eagerly licked up. After this water was again poured over the hand that had been used in eating, and all returned to sit about talking while the ones who had been serving were having their food. The women of the household also had their meal at this time.

Look at a contrast to this feast which showed the change that is being occasioned among the descendants of the crude mountain hordes of Shans who once ruled the valley, caused by their contact with the Christian idealism of the west. The Padri and the Memsahib were with the Boggses at Jorhat, where the Christian school is located, and they were invited to a similar feast at the home of Henry Babu. Henry was a man of the older generation of Assamese Christians, from which people

there are very few converts. He was a man of sturdy character, and of courage and great determination. When a young man and just married, a little less than fifty years ago, King was a young missionary and was planning to go to Kohima to open a station for work among the Angami Nagas. He needed an Indian worker to go with him, but it seemed that none were available.

This was not to be wondered at, for of all the Nagas, the truculent Angami was the most to be feared. The head-hunting Aos, Lotas, and other tribes were hated, but the Angami was feared and respected. They have the best physique of all the hillmen. They are bold, independent and manly. The Government had found them intractable. Two or three small expeditions had served to teach the Garos in the lower hills the power of the Queen, but ten separate campaigns had been carried on against the Angamis within sixteen years—between the years 1835 and 1851—and they were just as ready to raid villages and markets as ever! A new policy of non-interference in their internal quarrels, and of closing the plains bazaars to their traders, was tried out without effect. During the first year under this plan, they made twenty-two different raids, in the course of which they killed, wounded, or carried captive as slaves, one hundred and seventy-eight people from the plains! On this account an armed force was stationed in the hills the following year, and the Angami country was proclaimed a District, directly under a British officer. His headquarters were located at Kohima, and for ten years the tribe gave no further trouble. But in 1878, when Mr. Damant, the Political Officer in charge of the District, was entering Khonoma, one of the large villages, in the course of his duties, he was shot. This was the signal for a great up-

rising. Thirteen villages took part in the war. They invested Kohima for eleven days, but Major Johnson from Manipur, a neighboring state, arrived just in the nick of time to save the town from massacre.

The campaign which followed was pushed in real earnest. The thirteen villages which had taken part were attacked one after the other, and many of them made a good fight. All Naga villages are located on hilltops that are easily defended, and each of these had stone walls, bamboo palisades, rock chutes, and other strong fortifications. The one or two pathways whereby it was possible to approach any of these villages were well defended. They were easy to hold because on both sides of the narrow track up the hill there were deep ditches which were filled with sharpened, poisoned bamboo stakes. The gates themselves were heavy wooden doors grotesquely decorated with demon faces carved in relief on the outerside, and the entire entrance was most strongly held by the pick of the warriors. But all these preparations availed nothing against the rifles and small cannon which were used against them. Every village was captured, many were burned, and the remainder occupied by troops. Coming at last to realize that it was futile to fight against "the great Queen," for Queen Victoria was ruling at that time, the Angamis submitted and have given no further trouble.

But it was for work among this tribe that King desired an Assamese Christian helper. The plains people had no delusions as to the character of the people. Rumor never serves to decrease a bad reputation; and the real courage of Henry in volunteering to go to Kohima is worthy of all praise. It is to be remembered that Tuburi, his young wife, a fine-looking Assamese girl, went with him also. If it was an act of bravery for a man, it was heroism on

Photo by courtesy of Messrs. John Smeel & Co.

ELEPHANT DRAGGING TIMBER

the part of an attractive plain's woman, to be willing to endure not only the hardships of the long dangerous journey, but to brave the peril which her youth and beauty accentuated. For a number of years they continued at Kohima, but as Henry was needed for translation work, he was called to assist in the revision of the New Testament. At the time of his death in 1927 he was the head assistant in the Bible School at Jorhat, the pastor of the local church, and also one of the comparatively few ordained Indian ministers in Assam.

In bringing up his family he had been extremely strict, though just; and these traits being so different from the easy-going disposition of the people in general, which results in exceedingly slack discipline in Indian families, the result is worthy of note. His salary was never large, but he contrived to give each of his sons a good education, and they are making good in life, in fact there is not another family in the entire Christian community in Assam that has turned out better.

At the time when the Padri visited Jorhat, Kamal the youngest son who had finished his medical education a short time before, was celebrating his wedding. He had been married for some time, but there had been no formal festivity, and now, as the Boggses were just about to leave on furlough, their departure was made the occasion for the wedding-feast.

The contrast with the village dinner was striking. The white guests were met at the door and ushered into a comfortable, clean sitting-room. Evidences of refinement were all about. There were many books in different languages. A parlor organ and a gramophone, as well as a violin, gave proof of a love for music, and several good records were played while the guests were waiting for

dinner. The dining-room was large, for an Indian home. The table was covered with a nice white cloth, and, with the mellow light of a kerosene hanging-lamp shining on the flowers and china it was a very pleasant place.

The dinner was served by the women of the household. Two of Henry's sons lived with him in the house, for they followed the old, joint-family system, which modern progress is destroying. Few Christian families maintain it to the extent which was formerly the custom among Hindus and even Mohammedans in this part of India. The food was exceptionally tasty; the rice itself—for this is always the main dish—was one of the very sweet varieties; but the curries of meat and vegetables, as well as the savories served, made it a real feast that gave every one that expansive feeling!

In this family it is immaterial whether knives, forks, or spoons are available, or not, for they are just as much at home with these implements as with their fingers for eating. Their etiquette and manners more nearly approximate to polite European forms than do those of the people of the villages.

But it was a different kind of an experience when Komila Babu, a wealthy Hindu of the Kaistha caste, invited the Padri and the Memsahib to dinner at his house. He met them as they were walking one evening when he was driving home. Stopping, he said to them:

"Wouldn't you come to my house for dinner?"

"It would be the greatest pleasure," said the Padri. "We have heard the reputation of what are called your 'Brahmin dinners,' and if you include me as belonging to the priestly class we shall be delighted."

"All right," laughed he. "Consider yourself a Brahmin, for it will be the same kind. I'll send for you early."

The home of this family was a large, rambling brick structure. The guestroom and the portion occupied by the men, were at the front, but as the women of the household were all "in purdah" their place was in the female quarters at the rear, where they would not be easily seen. None of them appeared during the entire evening.

A special entertainment had been arranged. Villagers, who were tenants of Komila Babu's family, had been brought in to act out some of the classic stories of Hindu mythology. There was no stage, no curtain, or stage-properties, but the actors used masks and wigs, and also a few crude instruments. The semipoetical recitations of the deeds of the heroes of old, which accompanied the acting, seemed to be of intense interest to the large audience which had felt free to gather without any invitation. They were welcome also, for this is the custom of the country. To those who were not very familiar with the archaic language used by the actors, a full hour of this kind of entertainment was somewhat wearisome. But after the play, the drums took up a different rhythm and things exciting began to happen. The tune was played on several flutes, but the largest part of the music was from the drums. This was the prelude to a *nautch,* or dance, which the Padri had always heard was a somewhat naughty performance. As it was impossible to leave without discourtesy to kind hosts, he sat tight. As, until very recently all parts in theatricals, *nautches,* and such in India, were taken by men and boys, there was not one girl among the number who were dressed as young women. Formerly no good woman would even appear in public, let alone act, but there were, and for that matter in many temples still are, companies of dancing girls who, though they are reputed to be people of ill fame, take part in some of the

most intimate acts of worship conducted by the priests. The dance at the house of Komila Babu followed the temple model, and the boys performed it in a way which justified its repute!

But the dinner which followed was a feast worthy of the gods of the household. The hosts, being caste Hindus (at home!) could not take food with guests who were Christians—nor any other save people of their own sect. When they were in other places these rules were not followed, and they ate practically any kind of food. The reason of this is that the real conservatives who oppose any change are the women of the land. Not the generation which is now evolving, for with education the old ideals, which were to a large extent based on ignorance, are being overthrown. But it is probable that in this family that would be made up of from seven to ten women and girls, none at that time could read or write, although the past ten years has changed that condition also; still the cooking that the women-folk of the household could do was evidence of thorough training along practical lines. The principal dish was rice, as in all Indian meals in this part of the land, but in this case it was made into *pilau,* the addition of refined butter, raisins, and many kinds of spices producing a most delicious rich dish; but there were also at least ten kinds of curries, vegetables, and relishes served with it.

Taking a cutlet from one of the side plates, the Padri tasted it, and according to the custom of the country, complimented his host. Knowing that Komila Babu would eat chicken (which is tabu to all good Hindus) when he was not at home, he wondered whether the rules of caste had been broken by the women of the household, in order to show greater courtesy to guests.

"This is fine, Komila Babu."

"What do you think it is?" he asked smiling, for he knew what the Padri was thinking.

"Well, I can't think that it is what it tastes like, but were it served in my own home I would say it is chicken cutlet."

"I thought so," said he, laughing heartily. "It is fish. My wife prepares these herself, and made these especially for you and the Memsahib."

"That is indeed kind of her. Will you please thank her very especially for us."

Among the dainty sweets of many kinds which followed the main meal, the *keer,* which is curded milk, was especially good. Prepared from rich milk from their own herd of cows, it was in large part cream, and, not having been permitted to stand too long it was almost sweet. Eaten with specially prepared rice, and with *shondesh,* which is a creamy candy, it was a most satisfying dessert for an excellent meal; but there was not one single eatable of all that were served that was prepared as the same foods are in Western lands. The *keer* would perhaps be recognized as cottage cheese, but that would have been all.

The drive home in the moonlight was a fitting climax to a most pleasant evening. The air was mild, and there was no breeze. The light of the full moon was bright, but not sufficiently so to reveal the details of poverty which were on all the houses that were passed; but it showed the beauty of the stately palms, the grace of the bamboo clumps, and the sparkle of the dew on the leaves.

In return for the constant hospitality of their friends in the district, the Memsahib and the Padri gave a *burra kana,* a formal, literally "large," dinner, and the list of guests who sat down to the meal in a Christian's home

illustrates the fact that caste rules have in reality lost their hold on thinking Indians of all classes. There was one Brahmin—this is the priestly caste—two Kaisthas—belonging to the next division—a Boidya, one Brahmo-Samaj, one wealthy Mohammedan landlord, one Roman Catholic, and three Christians!

The dinner consisted of seven courses. Among the meat dishes chicken was served—every one ate! With the beans there was pork—everybody had beans! There was mutton, which had been goat—and chicken, and no one asked any questions! But being at a Padri's house, nothing stronger than lemonade was served to drink, and it was remembered later that the Mohammedan and the Roman Catholic guests had excused themselves for a few moments while coffee was being served in the drawing-room, and it was not till long afterward that the Padri learned the reason for it. Knowing that it was a "dry" place where they were to dine they had brought their own "fire water" and had it outside in the carriage!

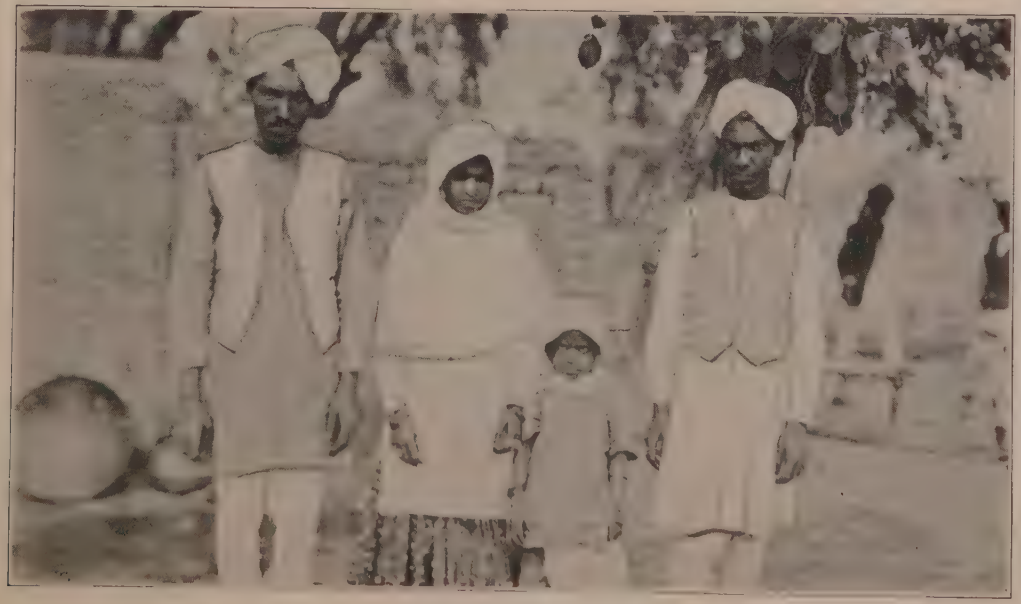
Although in past years there was a measure of social intercourse between Europeans and Indians, and in quite a few cases even what might be called friendship, yet this is growing less. Not however, between missionaries and their own people, but among those who are in India for other than religious purposes. White people outside the great cities are scattered. Having come to the land first as adventurers, later for business or in Government service, they gradually spread over the entire country. In doing this they have sought to carry their own ideals and civilization with them. The British especially are very conservative, and slow to change either customs, habits, or food. Wherever they went they set up homes as nearly as possible like the ones they loved in the old country.

The difference in the basic ideals of the two civilizations made it very hard for the two races to mingle socially, but the greatest hindrance was probably on account of the treatment of women by the Oriental. Europeans were not, and for that matter to this day are not, willing to have their wives and daughters associate with the men of a land who cannot trust their own women-folk sufficiently to permit them to associate with any others except the men related to them. This is not an unjust accusation but a matter of common knowledge to all who have lived in the Orient for any time. Very, very slowly the education of girls is bringing about a change, but up to the present the general statement holds true. Another hindrance to social intercourse was found in the economic situation. Pleasant fellowship and enjoyable friendship can be best had between people who are comparative equals. In India the two great divisions of the population have been the very rich and the very poor. There has not been an intelligent, reasonably wealthy middle class which corresponds to the stratum of society from which the large majority of the British officials and business men are drawn.

In addition to these things many white people cherish a fear, which seems really to be more than a mere suspicion, that India is a smoldering volcano of hatred to the foreigner, and that all that is required is that the people of the land obtain sufficient power, and firearms, and they will then immediately proceed to wipe the white man off the face of the country. To what extent this is true is hard to say; but it is entirely safe to assert that it is not the thought or the desire of the great masses of the poor people of India: but many circumstances point to actions and statements of the small class of politically-minded radicals whose efforts confirm the opinion.

The memory of things which have occurred in the past can never be effaced. Such events as the Mutiny when the well at Cawnpore was filled with the dismembered bodies of white women and little children inspired thoughtful men to state, "And never the twain shall meet," and it is the same deep-rooted feeling that prevents the confidence of real friendship between the two races to this day. In addition to this is the position of the conqueror and the conquered. The fact that the British have rescued the land from foreign invaders who had no right to it, and that all the peace and prosperity which is being enjoyed today are the result of their protection from not only outside conquerors, but from internal, never-ending wars, all these truths are being disparaged by the small class of somewhat educated politicians. Were it not for the British army, Mohammedans and Hindus would be at each other's throats day and night till one of these sects would rule. The communal disturbances wherein thousands have been clubbed, stabbed, shot, or injured otherwise, and this continuing to this day, confirm the assertion. It is noteworthy that the very worst of all these troubles occurred in Calcutta, one of the cities under Indian government; and it was not until the white police and troops were called in to help that the mobs could be controlled!

But the fact that the English-speaking, educated Indian is becoming vocal and is making his desire known to the entire world is an evidence of a marvelous development in the course of a single century. But as yet there is no real solidarity among the peoples of the peninsula. There is practically no sympathy between the conglomeration of different races which make up the population. Among races such as the Bengalis, Assamese, etc., there



INFANT MARRIAGE

The Marriage of These Two Couples Took Place in Lahore in 1928. The Little Girl Is but Five Years Old; Her Husband Standing Beside Her Is Seventeen. She Has Gone to His House to Live. The Other Woman Is Her Sister Who Is About Fourteen

is a language bond, but the hatred of caste that despises as untouchable one who speaks the same tongue, can never promote unity; and it is to be remembered that the Brahmins who arrogate to themselves the position of supreme superiority, are the cause of the beginning and perpetuation of this despicable condition. Should they at any time attain to real power caste, not qualification, would altogether control appointment to office.

However, regardless of the cause or the cure of the situation, white people have realized the attitude of the better class of Indians toward them and have been driven back upon their own kind for fellowship. It might be more correct to say that it has accentuated this tendency, and the result is that club life had a strong hold on the white residents of the land long before it spread so widely in the West. In the districts outside the cities, in particular, wherever there would be a dozen white people within riding or driving distance, a club would be organized. These are the real social centers of the Europeans in many parts of India; in reality, social intercourse with Indians is decreasing rather than the opposite. Recent political events have accentuated the tendency and have increased suspicion and dislikes.

While in comparison with the rest of India, Assam is still the wild northeast frontier, yet in contrast with conditions within the memories of many old-timers, the white resident now lives in overwhelming luxury. Among the planting community there are one or two regular club days each week; but in addition to these stated gatherings there are a number of special meetings during the cool season. When the rainy season is on there is much less social life because it is during the wet weather that tea manufacture is in full blast, and in addition to this the roads become

seas of mud and very few can get a car through to the club much of the summer.

A recent meet at a polo club is an illustration of the good times which serve to relieve the monotony of life for the planter. This organization is located near the center of a district about twenty-five miles long, in which there are approximately sixty white people who are members; no Indian of whatever standing would be admitted. While it happens that this particular association is strictly a polo club, yet on account of the increasing number of wives of planters who are attending it will be necessary to add such features as tennis and other sports in which they may take part, rather than have nothing to do except sit and watch the men play—and gossip. There are many clubs which combine all these features.

When meets or, as some of them are termed, "sprees," are held, other clubs are invited. In a district where there are inter-club polo matches, these become the chief feature of the day, but there may be racing, tennis, or other sports depending on the equipment and wealth of the club. As meals are always served at these special meetings it is necessary to erect temporary buildings, including camp-houses and dining-hall, because the permanent houses cannot accommodate all the visitors.

While grass huts and Paris hats do not seem consistent, yet the evening dress of both men and women at the Moran "Spree" was not incongruous. The dining-hall was tastefully decorated; palm leaves, Chinese lanterns, colored electric lights, and an abundance of paper streamers made it a very cheerful room, and the dainty clothing seemed very fitting. In order to keep from becoming slack in a debilitating climate, it is essential that attention be paid to dress, and occasions which require evening

clothes are a help to character. When Livingstone was asked why he shaved daily when he was in the heart of Africa, and no white man was within a thousand miles, he answered, "For the sake of my own self-respect." And that is one phase of it; but there is real pleasure in dressing up occasionally.

An eight-course dinner was served. Everything from soup to nuts. Some of the meats had been brought from Calcutta, six hundred miles away; but such things as asparagus and real cream came out of cans! Liquors of all kinds were available, and were served to any who wished them, but there was no heavy drinking at the tables. Even as recently as twenty years ago, when there were fewer married men, habits were different, and there was much more alcohol imbibed.

A very interesting comment on this change in the habits of the white men in Assam was made by Lazar, the Assamese evangelist who is employed by the Indian Christian Association in this area. In speaking with regard to the white men he had seen on the gardens, he said:

"The manager of Nakoi Garden [but that is not the real name] is a fine man. He is a good man too. I like to visit his garden. Why! He said to me: 'I want you to come often. Make all my people Christians. It makes them better workers and they drink less.'"

"Do you ever receive unkind treatment?" asked the Padri.

"No sir. There is only one garden in all my district where there has been any objection to preaching, but that was the fault of an unwise evangelist. The planter sahibs are much different from what they were when I was a clerk on one of the gardens. I do not know what they do in their own bungalows, but nowadays I never see one

of them under the influence of drink when they are about their work."

"Did you ever see that?"

"Oh, yes indeed! Many a time in my younger days. I have seen them come out to the factory half-intoxicated, red in the face and cursing and swearing. But not nowadays. There are so many more of them married, and a memsahib does make a difference to a man. They are usually kind and helpful to us evangelists."

The Padri could have told him that there was still too much friendship for John Barleycorn in their bungalows and clubs, as it is; but modern business is coming to realize that booze, efficiency, and profits, cannot coexist; and managers or assistants whose love for the bottle interferes noticeably with the work they are supposed to do, are very soon eliminated. While there are not many teetotalers, yet the number is growing. The ideals of white men in India are higher than they have ever been—though there is still much room for improvement. In former years the common thought was that home standards of religion and morals were to be shed at Port Said, by all men coming to India in business; but a young man in talking of this with the Padri, said:

"Bah! That statement sounds like the patter of a very cheap and small draper's clerk"—only he pronounced it "clark." And while his aspersion is correct, and while very, very many men now come to the Orient with the highest ideals, which they seek to retain, yet, in the not-too-distant past, that cheap patter was common opinion!

On account of the natural reticence of the British, as compared with the expressiveness of the American, they are not ready to discuss personal religious opinions. It is not done. But when any one becomes acquainted with

them and learns their real faith and belief, it is discovered that there are many sincere, faithful Christians among them. The Padri was on tour with a friend, a superior Government officer. They had gone to the headquarters of a rich landowner, who was a friend of both, in the Mission launch Grace, and were being entertained in the palatial residence which he had but recently finished. It was amusing when they came down to dinner. The landlord was a Hindu, and, when at home (!) follows caste rules, hence he could not dine with his guests, who were counted as belonging to the Christian "caste"; any one born of Christian parents is considered as a member of the community—but he had provided royally for their comfort. They happened to notice the two great sideboards which were at either end of the room—they were loaded. The one held some twenty varieties of fruits, most of which had been brought from Calcutta. There were apples, pears, oranges, peaches, grapes, mangoes, etc., etc.; but it was the other sideboard which made them smile, for on the lower shelf bottles of whisky, champagne, beer, wines, vermouth, etc., stood in bold array—but on the upper shelf there were two lone bottles —one of lime juice and the other ginger sirup!

"Ah, I see, Padri," grinned the officer, "the lower shelf is intended for you, the upper for me!"

But in the kindliness of his heart, the landowner knowing that the Padri never used anything alcoholic had provided the drinks that would help him be comfortable during the very hot days he was to spend in his home.

After dinner, when sitting under the electric fan, just before going to bed, the Padri went to get his Bible to read a bit. Finding that he had left it in the launch at the foot of the hill, he said to his friend:

"Do you happen to have the Good Book along?"

Although they had been friends for many years, and the officer had given all evidence in his life of being a God-fearing man, yet the Padri had had no inkling that he was a Bible student.

"Yes," answered he, "just there on the dressing-table."

Going to the place, the Padri found a pocket New Testament. Its leather back was much worn, the leaves were well thumbed, and its condition gave evidence to the fact that it was a constant companion consistently used.

While the moral and religious changes that are bringing more and more men of this type to the Orient have been comparatively slow, yet in other lines there have been rapid and marvelous innovations. In nothing is this so evident as in the means of transport; and this one factor has had much to do with keeping the home ideals more fresh and vivid in the minds of all who come to India on business affairs. Furloughs home are so much easier that contact is more frequent, and with not only convenience but comfort in transportation within the country itself, a more normal home life is possible, and many more men have their families with them. But twenty-five years ago when the Padri and the Memsahib were rolling along in the old tub-of-a-boat, the B. I. "Manorah" (not the present beautiful ship of that name), and looking out over the desert where the Suez Canal enters the arm of the Red Sea, the whole country was (and still is) a desolate waste of sand burning under a blistering sun. They speculated as to where the Children of Israel had crossed, and how they had ever lived in that awful waste, thirsty, carrying heavy burdens, including their little children—but those conditions are no more. Not only does a railroad carry passengers in a few hours over a route that

took weeks of steady travel for the best of caravans, but motor-bus lines link up the cities that were formerly separated by brigand-infested deserts; all these things emphasize the marvelous change that modern transportation has made in the entire Orient within the past twenty years.

Even ten years ago, the *palkee,* that boxlike vehicle that was carried by four men, was in common use; but is almost never seen now. Ponies have been used from the time of the Mohammedan invasions. One of their historians records that "a hundred warriors would turn and flee from one horseman." In the State of Manipur a type of sturdy, hardy ponies was developed, and formerly they were sold by the thousand to people in the plains, but that traffic is almost stopped, for the people who used to ride them are now using motor-cars; even Indians are carrying their produce to market in decrepit Fords. Up to very recent years even European officials, doctors, and missionaries used many of these hardy little animals for their work. One of the garden physicians owned thirty of the Manipuri ponies. He could not keep the expensive Australian horses which were being imported, so he brought the cheaper breed. As his inspections of many gardens required that he ride from thirty to forty miles *every* day, month in and month out, his plan was to own a large number of ponies—at one time it amounted to fifty—and to keep them at the different villages along his routes. As his program was fixed, the arrangement with the villagers who kept the ponies, was that at a specified time of a particular day he would be there and the fresh mount was to be ready. He would gallop every step of the way; dash up to the waiting animal, change saddle and bridle, and within two or three minutes would be away on the

run. The tired pony would be left to feed on what grass it could find till it was required again.

Missionaries have never been able to keep numbers of animals to take them over the country. Usually in the early years they walked. Later they used bullock-carts and if possible had one pony. For many years Bobbie was the Padri's entire stable. He was from the Bhutan Hills on the north of the valley, and was very similar in many things to the Manipuris but somewhat larger than the latter usually are. This was the pony that Etzemo the Naga hostler loved next to his little daughter Probhulata, the " Lord's little vine."

Once when the Memsahib had gone to Tura in the Garo Hills, the Padri went later to help her on the return journey. There were no railroads, and the one highway over which a cart could have been taken when it was new was broken in a dozen places. The only way to get to Tura was to go by one of the river steamers to the Rowmari landing, ten or twelve hours run down the Brahmaputra from Goalpara, and from there take the hill road, a matter of forty miles. Rather than engage a cart it seemed to be the best plan to take Bobby along on the steamer and to ride from the landing. Etzemo volunteered to carry the luggage, and as Ucchin, one of the schoolboys, had been having trouble with his eyes and required medical attention, he too wished to go along and was willing to carry also.

The steamer journey seemed to fit in admirably, for it landed them at Rowmari in the morning. The Padri rode on ahead slowly, and the two men came trudging behind with the kit. Gradually he lost sight of them, and leaving the track that branches off to the right to go on down the valley, he rode on to the little Government Rest-house at

Garabada. By this time it was afternoon; and, eating a small lunch which he had brought in his pocket, he sat and waited for the men to arrive. Teatime came, evening came, it became dark, then dinnertime arrived but no Etzemo or Ucchin. As he had nothing but a light lunch, the world seemed empty and hollow! Calling the old caretaker of the bungalow the Padri asked:

"Are there any utensils or dishes that belong to the place?"

"No, Sir, nothing of the kind. The sahibs who come always bring their own."

"Can I purchase any earthen cooking-pots in any shop near-by?"

"No, Sir. There is no shop."

"Could I get any rice or vegetables to cook?"

"No, Sir, no vegetables, but I could bring of my own rice."

"Well, that's fine. Is there any kind of a bucket about?"

"Oh, yes, several."

"All right," said the Padri. "We're getting somewhere at last. Now please do carefully what I tell you. Take the bucket to the river—take your lantern, for there may be a tiger about, and cobras are plenty as you know—and scour the iron of the vessel till it shines. Then bring about a gallon of water in it, and making a fire make the water boil as hard as it can, then bring it to me."

The reason for the very careful instruction in regard to the water was that the word for boil means "to heat" in the language they were using, and only too often when a few little bubbles begin to show, and when liquid is warm to the finger—dirty or clean—that may be thrust into it, it is brought with the assertion that it has "boiled."

Returning after what seemed a very long time, with the water steaming in a bucket that looked clean, though there was no means of knowing what it had been used for by travelers of all kinds, who had stopped in the bungalow—the Padri said to the caretaker:

"Now use the hot water to wash it out again," and the old fellow stared with surprise—had he not washed it in cold water! But he did so. "That's fine," said the Padri. "Now if you will sell me two pounds of your rice, clean it well and boil it in the bucket just as you would for yourself, and bring it with a little salt. And please hurry, for I am getting very hungry."

It was late indeed till the food arrived, but when it did the only expression that fit the case was, "Oh boy!" It was a feast fit for a king. Just a plate of rice and salt!

Etzemo and Ucchin did not arrive till almost midnight. They had turned off on the road that led down the plain instead of coming on into the hills, and had walked on for about two hours before they thought of inquiring; when they did ask they found that they had added four hours' journey to the day's work! They had tramped the whole day with nothing to eat and were more than delighted with the rice which had been saved for them in the same bucket.

On the return journey with the Memsahib and the three children, the combination of all kinds of transport looked like a circus parade. As the early rains had begun, special protection was necessary for the little folks. A bullock-cart was hired and fitted with a long chair under the mat canopy for the Memsahib and the little, ten-days-old baby. The Government Officer had loaned them two of his elephants, and a tentlike covering had been made over the pad of the largest for the other two children. The Padri

rode on Bobby. What with elephants, cow-cart, pony, white and brown people, among whom was a Mohammedan, a Hindu cartman, several Garos, a Naga and several local Assamese, it had many of the elements of a parade.

Other denizens of the jungle entered into the picture at intervals also. As there were short-cuts which the cart could not take, but which would save considerable distances, the Padri would use these and wait again where they would join the main road. Riding along one of these, with not a soul in sight, he was startled by the rush of several large animals in the small bamboos which bordered the road. There was first a steady, long scurry . . . then a bound, a thud; a bound, another thud . . . one single loud bleat of a deer in distress . . . and silence! A tiger had caught his evening meal. From considerations of etiquette (among others) the Padri did not impose his presence as an uninvited guest at the feast!

Elephants were formerly much more used for touring and travel than at present. Many more roads are now available, but even to this time there are many places off the main routes, and through forests and jungles that are impassable for any kind of vehicle, or even a pony during the rainy season. This factor, the influence of rain on travel, can scarcely be appreciated in a country having a comparatively light rainfall. On all this frontier from ninety to one hundred inches of water is precipitated every year; and of this, by far the largest part during the four summer months. Cherrapunji, in the Khasi Hills, which are a part of the same formation as the Garo and Naga Hills, has a rainfall of from five to six hundred inches each year. This is altogether unusual, for it is caused by the peculiar formation of the range. A large valley which

extends up from the plains of Eastern Bengal, is blocked by precipitous bluffs; the natural result is that the rain-bearing currents strike against the face of these mountains and, being driven sharply upward into a cooler stratum of air, precipitate their moisture. It is interesting to go to the hills just back of Cherrapunji, for ten miles farther in the hills, along the course of this same air current, there is not sufficient rain to permit the people to raise good crops.

That same season it was necessary for the Padri to visit Kasingdap, a village eleven miles off the cart road, on in toward the foot-hills of the mountains. The rains had converted all tracks into morasses of mud, but as several couples were waiting to be married it was important that he reach the place. The headquarters of one of the large *zemindaris,* which are landed properties, was near, and as the owners were his friends, he borrowed an elephant to take him over the worst portion of the journey.

At one place along the road a great tree had been cut down for the purpose of making a boat. It had cleared a large space in the heavy jungle which had surrounded it; and, as it happened, the Padri was riding along past this spot in the afternoon, when the sun was shining against the green wall of standing trees. Happening to look up toward the top of a forest giant on the edge of this cleared place, he saw a glorious, golden-yellow orchid shining like a great mass of gold which had lodged in the crotch of two large limbs of the tree. The entire plant was a mass of rich yellow, bell-shaped flowers in streamers that were fully five feet long, and the whole was larger round than a barrel! While beautiful flowers are common in the jungles of Assam this was one of the most magnificent orchids that had ever been seen.

The elephant which had been loaned for the journey was one of the slowest animals ever born. It seemed to deliberate whether to bend its knee to lift its foot, whether to lift the heel to permit the toes to get off the ground, whether to put the foot down again to permit the knee to straighten—whether in reality, life was worth a motion of any kind, anyway! Thinking that the *mahout* was not pushing the elephant as hard as he might, the Padri took his place astride the animal's neck, which is the proper way to drive them. (To any one who knows the Orient, the silliness and absurdity of the seat on top of an elephant's head which is the custom among showmen in America, is entirely ridiculous.) Ordinarily, the faster the *mahout* tickles back of the ears, the faster the animal moves; but in this case, the white man's shoes were so much rougher than the bare feet to which it was accustomed, that it caused a "back-fire," for with a decidedly ugly grumble the elephant started to go backwards—and fully as fast as it had been going forward! The only possible recourse was to let it go along at its own pace—if it may be so termed—and the eleven miles of the journey were covered in ten hours!

The early rice about Kasingdap was green at this time of the year, and the wild elephants were coming down from the neighboring hills to eat it. The enormous brutes are very destructive, not only on account of what they eat, but a small elephant's foot will trample down a square foot of plants at each step, and it is to be remembered that each animal has four feet; and by the time one of them has merely walked about in a field for a while, it will have pushed more rice down into the mud than it has eaten—and the appetite of an animal weighing tons is no small matter! Fortunately for the people, they are afraid

of fire, and the villagers have bundles of dry bamboos and similar materials, ready to light the moment an alarm is raised during the night.

While observing the communion in their little church building the next evening, just in the midst of the service, the screams of the wife of the school-teacher, who had not been able to come to the meeting, were heard—the service stopped, and when her next shout *Mongma!* Elephant! explained the cause, every man in the congregation was on his feet and out of the building on the run. The Padri grabbed his gun and went with the crowd to save the crops. The men ran for torches, and within a few moments all were in the fields. There were four elephants, one of them an old tusker that had been known to the previous generation, and as soon as they saw the fire coming they started for the jungle. As they took refuge behind some clumps of high grass, it was impossible to get a shot at them, which is just as well, for all elephants are protected by law, and unless one is a rogue, and proclaimed to be killed, there is a heavy fine imposed if any are shot. But when they were driven entirely away the minister and the congregation returned to the church and the service was completed.

Being on the edge of the Garo Hills, Kasingdap is really a wild place. In addition to jungle chickens, pheasants, partridges, and many kinds of smaller game, three or four species of deer, wild cattle, gibbons, monkeys, as well as many kinds of animals that are dangerous are all about. The same night that the elephants were driven away, two leopards were "sawing wood" within a half mile of the village. The sound of their roar is similar to a great crosscut saw going back and forth through a hollow log: "Gur-r-r ur-r-r, gur-r-r ur-r-r," and the volume of the

noise causes it to carry for miles through the stillness of the night.

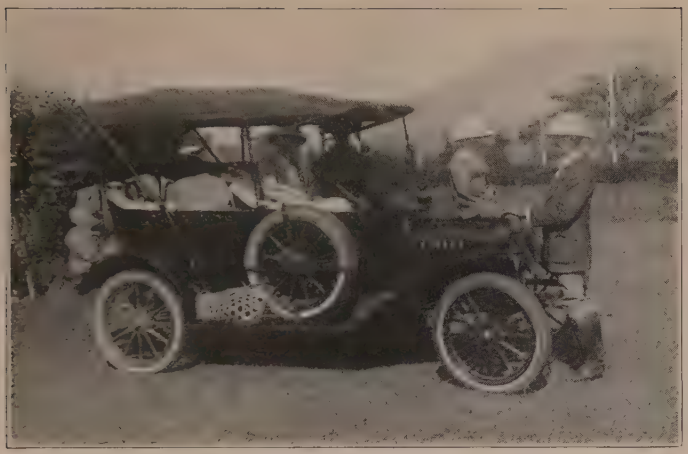
Bears are very plentiful in the neighborhood also. Just the year before, during the rains, the small stream near-by rose so high that it flooded the entire place, and the water was two feet deep in the village. A medium-sized bear came along, whining and splashing through the deeper pools to the path which was elevated a little and did not have so much water over it. Ucchin, one of the young men of the place, saw the bear and going for it, caught hold of its ears and tried to hold its head under water to drown it. He yelled for the other fellows to come to his aid, but as they were a little slow in getting to him the bear broke loose and bit him badly on the arm, as well as clawing him on the body. The scars on his arm look as though they are the result of very severe burns.

With the opening of roads into all these wild parts of Assam and the development of the rich, waste lands in the entire valley—and the process is going on very rapidly—the larger wild animals are being driven farther and farther into the hills, but there are still very many places which are either swampy, clay soil, or Government Reserves, where there are abundant jungles in which they can live on the plains. Just a few weeks ago at one o'clock in the morning the Assam Mail train was crossing a large, open glade in the forest about fifty miles from Sibsagar. It was a moonless night, and as the engines are not equipped with headlights, the crew could see nothing in front of them. Suddenly the entire train received such a shock that all the passengers were wakened, it ran on slowly for a short distance and then stopped—the engine had run into a herd of elephants that were crossing the line! A mother and her young one were both killed. Even though

the shock had been sufficient to stop a heavy train within a hundred and fifty yards, it was not derailed!

But modern transport and the behemoth of old have collided—and civilization wins. In ancient time there were no roads; later the rajahs constructed a network of highways all through the valley, and elephants were not only the mark of wealth and power, but the means of transport for the nobility. But during the years the Burmans were in control, and also for quite a time before, when the weakling kings were fighting among themselves, these royal roads were permitted to fall into decay until the majority of them were useless and forgotten. In recent years the British have surveyed the country and have found the alignments of these old highways; in some places badly washed out, in others with trees a hundred years old growing in the middle of the road; but in the meantime, as a matter of military necessity they had constructed other roads which are now in use. As yet, however, there are very few permanent thoroughfares in the valley or hills, but earth tracks are opening rapidly into all parts of the country.

While it is true that immigration and industry are bringing hundreds of thousands of people from other parts of India into Assam, and that through them the land is being opened up to cultivation, still the greatest transformation of the ages has been wrought by the motor-car. While it may seem to be rather far-fetched, yet it is true that the motor-car is crowding the elephant in his own special field—hunting big game! Not only do men go by car to the places where their camps are set up, but they even take runs at night along the roads, with headlights lit, and quite occasionally get a shot at a prowling tiger or leopard!



AN EARLY FORD

Camp Kit, Both Inside and Out. The Basket Contains Chickens

BUICK AND BEHEMOTH

The Ancient and Modern in Transportation in Assam

One evening after polo, the members of a Mongoldai club were sitting having the usual drinks, when a tiger came out onto the field where they had been playing. Immediately two of the fellows started out in their cars to chase it. Round and round the ground it careened, the cars heading it off every time it tried to break away into the jungle, but finally it made a spurt and got clean off! But it must be admitted that such incidents are not very common!

So far as the people of the land are concerned, the motor-bus has done more to open up the world to them within the past five years, than all the ponies, palkees, bullock transport, and elephants or even railroads did in the past thousand years. And the motor-car has been the greatest boon that has ever been conferred on the white residents of the land. It is the deliverer of the foreigner from the monotony occasioned by the distances which separate families and bungalows from each other. Formerly, in the days of horses and ponies, fifteen miles was a long ride. To go to the club and back the same afternoon implied a journey of thirty miles, and it was no wonder that men hesitated to marry and bring their wives into so much that was hard. But now when nearly all garden assistants have a motor vehicle of some kind, even if it is nothing but an antediluvian Ford, forty or fifty miles does not entail nearly the same effort that half that distance did even ten years ago.

What the automobile has done in permitting scattered white people to get together when there is any need, was shown by several recent occurrences in Sibsagar. It is just four months since two young men were driving a Chevrolet into the Hingrijan garden. It was about five o'clock in the evening. The man who was driving did not know the

road as he was new to the district, and he had never been to this place before. As the lane just before coming to the bungalow is particularly good, he was driving rather fast when they reached the sharp, right turn through the gates; and as the posts are set at a peculiar angle he was not able to bring the car around quickly enough, it smashed into the post on the side where Thomson, the other of the two men, was sitting. The impact threw him out against the post, and he was killed.

On account of the climate in India, it is imperative that the dead be buried within twenty-four hours. This in itself is always a shock to friends, for it happens time and again that people enjoying each other's company of an evening, may have to bury one of their number before another sunset. But the remarkable thing about the funeral of Thomson was that by one o'clock the following day more than sixty men had gathered from gardens scattered over an area fifty by twenty miles! Word had been spread by messengers and by telegraph, but it was the motor-car which made the gathering possible within such a short time. A few years ago but fifteen, or twenty men at the most, would have been all that could possibly have been present from the same area.

Within a few weeks after this, Kline, the Manager of the Rajmai garden, which is nine miles from Sibsagar, died suddenly. One of his assistants went to see him early in the morning in regard to the day's work and found him dead in bed; by three o'clock of that same day over eighty men had gathered for the funeral. This was impressive because it revealed the closeness of the tie which binds white people in a foreign land, and also because it showed how quickly they could get together in case of necessity.

Missionaries have been greatly benefited by the motor-

car. For the most part the ubiquitous Ford has been their means of transport, though a few have been able to rise to the next higher class because some friend has made them a present, or some one has died and left them a little legacy which they have invested in a car as a kind of comfort insurance; or it has happened in a few cases that the missionary was able to put one or two old cars into shape, giving them a coat of paint and selling them, and finally in this way has been able to procure a good one, and this adds to his efficiency and makes it possible for him to double work in helping alter the outlook of the people of the land.

The work of the evangelistic missionary has remained the same in principle from the time when he went out on foot among the common folks of the land, preaching and singing the story he came to tell. Nowadays the touring is done by car, but it means that one man is able to do what would have required three or four with the earlier equipment; but the purpose and effort are the same—to make known the idealism of the Christ. A large part of the year is spent camping in any kind of a house that may be available. As often as not it is the church building or the schoolhouse; any way or place so that he may be among the people. Ordinarily this involves carrying complete camp equipment—beds, clothing, food, servants—everything that is required for comfort in addition to the rude necessities of bare existence; for there is little to be had in the way of supplies and nothing in the way of conveniences out in the villages. On this account the missionary's car usually looks like a Christmas tree—it is all hung round with everything!

While a humble Ford—old model—induces no rhapsodies, yet it typifies the marvelous change which has come

to pass in this wild northeast frontier of Rajah Sib Singh, since the time when it was first known to the outside world. The people have changed from being serfs to the status of politicians—or at the least of having an interest in those who are running for office, for is there not monetary value in a vote? Ideas of comfort have risen from the swing of the man-borne palkee to the purr of the Packard; but the transformation of ideals is the miracle of the ages. Not that any large proportion of the people are Christian, yet it is the idealism of Christ that has compelled the new meaning that is being read into the stories of the gods of the land.

Only one hundred years ago between thirty and fifty thousand Assamese from the Brahmaputra valley were held as slaves among the Burmese and Nagas. For the common people of the land there was no personal freedom, nor was there any certain tenure of property of any kind. Being subject to the whims of rajahs and their satellites, no man's life even was his own! Today with the assurance of measurable justice, and with the guaranty of peace and protection from oppression, the people have prospered beyond the imaginations of previous generations; and now there are those among them who are assuming the responsibility of proclaiming the ideal and spirit that is the fountain from which these blessings have come—the idealism of Jesus.

Mahiram was a Hindu of one of the very best families among the Assamese. He had become a Christian, and to the astonishment of all who knew the pride of the high-caste Indian, accepted baptism at the hands of an evangelist who had been a coolie. One day when the Padri was busy building the new bungalow in Sibsagar he came to him in great distress saying:

" Sir, I would like you to come with me to my parents' village. The people have outcasted my father and mother. They have accused them falsely, and if you will go we can help them."

" But, Mahiram," answered the Padri, " I am so busy. You know that these common workmen cannot be trusted to do any work if the boss is away; and I am hindered with this broken ankle. It is not well yet, and I limp around slowly keeping things going. But tell me what is the trouble."

" Some one in the village is spreading falsehoods," said he. " It has been told that my parents ate with me after I was baptized, and it is not true, but for this reason they have forbidden my parents to use the village well and have stopped all social communication with them. Do come."

" Certainly, Mahiram. In a case like this I'll help all I can."

The ten miles to the village took a full hour. Several times the car stuck in great mud holes, but most of the road was a bog. When they reached the place Mahiram went to call his parents and also the elders of the village, for he desired the Padri to speak with them also. In a short time an old lady came to the car and in wailing tones began her complaint:

" Sir, why have you taken my son from me? "

" How is that, mother," answered the Padri. " I have done nothing to your son. Personally I had nothing to do with him accepting Jesus. He learned of it through others."

Just then the father came, and with him Mahiram and a large number of the people from the village. The old man asked the same question of the Padri, but his son

said: "Sir, if you'll permit I'll answer. I would like to say a few things to the people too."

"Certainly, Mahiram. Go on."

Turning to the villagers, he said: "Friends, I have come to remonstrate with you on account of the injustice you are doing my father and mother in outcasting them. The statement that they ever broke caste by eating with me after I was baptized is entirely untrue. What is more I have never taken food inside the courtyard even, since that time, and I want you to remove the injustice. I will tell you all why I became a Christian. The Padri Sahib here did not convert me. The reason for my change was on account of my little son who died. As you all know when my first-born boy, who was my hope for salvation, as a Hindu, took ill, I performed all the ceremonies, made all the offerings, and in fact did everything that the religion taught, in order that he might be healed. As you know he died. I could not understand what I had done to displease the gods. I offered sacrifices, performed the ceremonies, fed the Brahmins, did all that I could to bring peace to my wife and myself, but nothing availed. I searched the holy books, but there was no light through them. And then I read a little book of Jesus.

"One day about a year before that time I had been to the weekly market and had heard some people preaching that there was peace and salvation in their religion. One of their men went about in the crowd offering small books which he said told the story of their Master, and as they were only two cents each, I bought one. When the holy scriptures could offer me no peace I read this one, which was called *The Good News,* and as I read I believed and for the first time found peace in my heart. That is the reason I became a Christian.

"But will you tell me why you do a sore injustice to my parents because of my actions? Even though they should have been guilty of eating with me today, what sin would they have done? Would it be as bad as what you and I know goes on in that *namghor* [pointing to the village house of worship that stood a half mile away]? You know only too well that the outlander coolie woman who stays there and prepares the food that you all, including the priest, eat on days of worship, is a prostitute, and her child belongs to one of you! And would it be more of a sin for my parents to feed me who has sought and found peace in a holy, pure Saviour?"

The men of the crowd became a little restless. They knew that what he was saying was true and did not like that it be told in public. Several said: "No, no, Mahiram. It will be all right. We'll see to it that the ban is lifted."

"All right," said he. "That will be well. But I would like you to do more than that. Believe on this same Jesus, for his Spirit makes the heart right, gives peace because of this, and brings an assurance that takes away the fear of the gods in this life as well as after death."

And Mahiram was right: Indirectly through a nation that is Christian in its idealism, the land has peace. Through them the wild frontier is receiving the blessings of modern civilization and the opportunity for self-development: but directly, the teachings of the missionaries, now seconded by almost a hundred and fifty thousand adult Christians in Assam alone, are changing the basic beliefs of the people. The criterion of judgment and action, among priests and people, is no more the doings of the gods, but the idealism which Jesus taught.

VIII

THE HOLY MAN'S HOME

"Boom! Boom! *Hori Bol! Hori Bol!*"

"Of all the new ones! What's that?" asked the Padri. Looking out of the window of the old, rickety bungalow in Nowgong he saw a "holy" man going up the street. His hair was a long, ash-covered, matted cootie-cage. It had not been washed for twenty years, nor was it ever combed (that would hurt!). His body was naked, but for a small apron, and covered with ashes and various caste marks, indicating that he was a follower of the most lewd of the Hindu sects, and they are many.

"Boom! Boom! *Hori Bol! Hori Bol!*" he shouted as he went down past the young ladies' bungalow.

The Padri and the Memsahib had moved from the lower end of the valley and were located in Nowgong which was at the lower extremity of the area wherein the worst of the atrocities committed by the Burmese had taken place. The call of the dirty mendicant emphasized the paradoxes which are so constantly evident in the whole of India but especially among Hindus. "God is form. God is formless. God is eternally knowing. God is without knowledge, God is the cause of sin, God is the source of righteousness," and so on, and so on! The great secret, sacred name of God, *Om* or *Ong,* is never to be mentioned aloud, and yet this dirty "holy" man did not hesitate to shout it at the top of his lungs! The *Hori bol* so commonly used, meaning "Shout Hori" is in praise of Krishna, one of the gods who has among his many

THE NEW BUNGALOW ON THE SIBSAGAR TANK

THE HOLY MAN'S HOME

Entrance to the Moore Bungalow
in Nowgong

appellations that of *Hori*. He is one of the most popular of all the gods, and the most vile rites and practises are connected with this cult. Yet with the permeation of the teachings of Christianity, educated Hindus are now seeking to spiritualize the records of such actions as are offensive to right-thinking men of every race. But it is the character of the gods and saints or "holy" men whom a people reverence that is the real criterion of the moral character of that people.

Yet in Nowgong, the real holy man who commanded the respect of all communities, was not the filthy, shouting fellow who paraded the streets begging, but "Hadu Moore Sahib" (The Holy Saint Mr. Moore). For thirty years this missionary had gone in and out among the people of the District, and his life had been so sincere and true that he won the respect of even Hindus and Mohammedans.

At the time of his death a young Hindu, who was in Government service, located in Dhubri two hundred miles away, but whose home was in Nowgong, when he heard that his friend had died and that his ashes were to be buried near his home, so great was his love for the good man, took leave and paid all his own expenses so as to be present at the funeral!

The Indian Christian community which had gradually grown up around him in his field, had given him many a heartache. Their weakness and failure to live up to the ideals which they understood had been a sore trial to Moore. But his heart would have been satisfied could he have seen the evidence of their love and respect for him, when the men of the community went to Ramsey, the Manager of the Jiajuri Tea Estate, in order to obtain a large stone to take in to Nowgong to place over his grave. Several of their leaders were sent by the Asso-

ciation which met near the garden. They went to the bungalow and after salaaming, said to him:

"Sir, as you know, our missionary has passed beyond. We desire a suitable monument to preserve his grave in Nowgong. We have seen some very large stones over there in that field. They are the remains of one of the buildings erected by the early kings of Assam, but as it is all fallen down we would like to have your permission to take one of them for a tombstone."

"Surely. You are welcome to it," said Ramsey, "but how will you get it the fourteen miles in to the town? It weighs two tons or more."

"Ah, Sir, we thought that in your kindness you could permit us to use the pair of strong wheels you have there near the factory, the ones you used to bring the last large boiler. Some of us worked for you while that was being installed."

"Very well," he answered, smiling at their ingenuity in getting help. "Have you any ropes?"

"No, Sir," said Lucas, their spokesman, with a twinkle in his eye, "but we thought that maybe your kindness would permit us to use the ropes we saw in your storeroom."

"All right," he said good-naturedly. "Go to it. But be sure to return the wheels and ropes."

The Padri who had been sitting near, enjoying the conversation, said:

"I'll see to that. If they succeed in dragging that rock to Nowgong they will deserve credit."

Sixty men from the town and the District also, gathered the next day and swung the stone up under the axle of the pair of wheels. It was a beautiful piece of hewn granite which had been used as a bathing-stone on the

edge of the palace tank. It had lain there unused for more than two hundred years.

With a long rope fastened to each end of the axle they started to haul their load to Nowgong early in the forenoon. Knowing that they would have no food during the day, and hoping that they would get through by mid-afternoon, the Padri went ahead to see that tea was prepared for them when they would arrive. But mid-afternoon passed, evening came, it grew dark, nine o'clock came, then ten; and only then did the tired, sweating crowd arrive with the great stone.

Placing it on the grave and taking the ropes to the compound as quickly as possible, they fell to and ate and drank like starving sailors. But they were satisfied. They had given something of themselves in putting that mark of their love on the grave of the Holy Man of Nowgong.

Such reverence for the departed seems natural to the Orient. Ancestor-worship in one form or another is prevalent in many nations. The East is old. The glamor of the young ambition which rules the nations of the West has long since departed; her peoples are disillusioned and to them the past seems to be more than the present. Remnants of the glory of former ages are on every hand, and they all call aloud the futility of individual aspirations. The horse of the angel of life carries double, and the other rider is the angel of death, who is only too often the master of the steed. Any good man who lives kindly and who is helpful to others is long remembered.

It is no wonder that the music of India is sad. Its minor key typifies so much of her history, and no part of the whole land, nor of Assam, the northeast frontier province, has seen as much of suffering, torture, and death as has the Nowgong area. Less than one average lifetime

before Moore was born—not even a half century—the Burmese hordes came through the hills on the east of the valley and looted and raped the entire land. The brunt of their diabolical fury, however, seemed to fall on this wretched district. To this day the older men repeat the tales they themselves heard from their own fathers' lips. They tell how the members of their own families were tortured and killed. Many were flayed alive, and even women were plunged into boiling caldrons of oil. But the perfection of sport was to drive a crowd of men, women, and children into a thatched *namghar,* which is the village prayer-house, and set it on fire! The memory and influence of these years of *upadrab,* the great persecution, still haunt the people of this sad portion of Assam.

One of the little streams used by all the invaders of the valley when they came into Nowgong, is called the Kollung. It was used by Moore in the course of his touring among the people, and because of the fact that it is evidently a very old channel of the Brahmaputra, and aside from the water it receives from that stream has no other source or tributaries, until the railroad was built through the valley at the beginning of this century, it was the chief means of communication from Nowgong to the outside world.

When the Padri and Memsahib were living in Nowgong, after the death of Moore, their motor-launch *Grace* was towed up the large river by one of the cargo-steamers and left at Silghat which is the landing station on the Brahmaputra. It is located several miles below the mouth of the Kollung through which the launch had to be run into the station. When they went out to bring her in they found that some adjustments were required, and they were somewhat delayed in starting home and did not reach

the town till late in the evening. But that is the story of the river. When a voyage may be started, when it will be finished, or what may happen on the way can never be surmised. As the *Grace* was "put-putting," as the Indian children called the sound that the motor made, along down the stream just about dusk, the Padri was surprised to see a small steamer puffing up toward them.

"Hello, Captain," sang out the Padri.

"Bless my eyes, if it isn't the Padri himself! How did you get here?" shouted Captain Leonard from the steamer.

"But how'd you get here yourself? A little steamer in a mud creek like this is a shock!"

"Not at all—to us. Every year we run these feeder steamers up to Nowgong from the main river. The traffic is nothing like it was before the days of the railroad, but we keep it going. This kind of feeder service is run on very many of the smaller streams all through Assam. The larger boats on the river depend on them for cargo. I'm just doing the survey of this channel to see if it is clear and safe. Come on over and have some tea."

Tying up the boats they had tea together and gossiped of the happenings on the river. Formerly all the business life of the country was tied up with the steamer service and the oldtimers have had many interesting experiences, but the coming of better land communications is causing a reduction in the number of white men employed on the rivers. Motor-boats, however, have made up for some of the thrills that were formerly had through seeing many wild animals; not that tiger and other jungle denizens are entirely absent, for they are not, but the opening of the land to settlement and cutting down the great grass near the river has tended to lessen the number. Leonard

was telling of a nice tiger which had been shot by the Pilot Superintendent on the beat below his on the Brahmaputra, and the Padri said to him:

"Say, why don't you get a motor-launch? You could have many a chance at game of all kinds up along the small streams, and in addition to that it would help you in your survey work. You would not be dependent on the large steamers as you are now."

"A jolly good idea," said he. "Where could I get one like yours?"

"Well, we have another. It has been used on the upper river about Sadiya, but it is now for sale. It is called the *Mishing*," said the Padri. "I was just up the Subinsiri River and brought her down. She is a great boat; full teak built, all-over cabin, and a powerful two-cylinder, kerosene-burning motor. Just the thing for you.

"I had a funny experience while on the way down with her. I was taking her to Sadiya, but as you know we have to come down the Subinsiri quite a distance to get into the Brahmaputra. I had never been there before, nor had I ever handled the *Mishing*. But as there was no one else available to do the job I was requested to undertake it. I had never even examined the motor and did not know its peculiarities, but going to Badoti, the place where she was, I looked her over a little and started gaily down the stream. Everything went well till we were just out of the mouth of the smaller river, when the motor began to cough and sputter, and stopped!

"There was nothing to do but anchor and begin the hunt for trouble. As I did not know where to look, it took quite a while to trace it, and then I found that the base of the engine was chock full of kereosene! The feed had been opened too much. When this was cleared up

everything ran beautifully, and we sailed on—as I thought up the Brahmaputra. A *Ghat* (landing) finally came into view around a bend—and to our disgust, it was the one twenty miles down, instead of up the stream! When the boat was anchored and then started, I had turned around in the opposite direction! It surely did give us a late run till we reached Kokilamukh Ghat that night. Well, that is the boat which is for sale."

"Very well," teased Leonard, "if you'll guarantee that she does not have the habit of crawfishing like that all the time, I'll put it up to the agents and try to get them to buy it. But does that happen to be the same boat in which I saw you and Swanson bucking that roaring flood last year? You remember I hailed you from the Despatch steamer as you were hugging the bank way above Dihing Mukh. That surely was some flood! How did you get to Dibrugahr that day? I do not remember seeing you again that trip. I came back down the day following."

"No, you are right, you did not see us. That surely was an experience! It was kind of you to have the big steamer pull in and ask us if we were in trouble. We were not—at that time! That morning we had come from Dihing Mukh, about ten miles below the place you saw us. It was a part of the same trip up from the Subinsiri. I had written to Swanson in Golaghat, telling him that if he would come along I would show him the time of his life. Well, he had it!

"He had met me at one of the landings some days before, and we had been having a nice time till we came to Dihing. Do you know the Woods who live there? He is an Anglo-Indian, a member of our church and a real, good sort. When we ran in there to see him the day before he insisted on us staying the night with him in the

bungalow, rather than sleeping on the boat. It was more comfortable to be in a house, and so we accepted the invitation. To our surprise the river was a roaring flood when we got up the next morning, it had risen almost six feet, and more was coming.

"Wood was running his sawmill there at that time. He had some thousands of logs in large floats, tied along the bank in front of his house. As we were sitting at breakfast there was a shout outside, and he jumped up from the table, upset his chair over backwards, and bolted out of the house as hard as he could run. His sister remarked, 'The rafts are loose!'

"Swanson and I left the table in a hurry and went for the *Mishing* to help him try to round up the logs. He had his large launch, the *Hopewell,* at that time, and as she ran on gasoline he was way down the river before we were able to get started. As so often happens when one is in a hurry, and on account of not knowing the engine very well I got too much oil in her, and she would not pull. But when we did get down to where he was we found him trying to herd the logs in to the bank, but as the fastenings had broken and they were floating separately it was no use, and he called to us: 'No good! Come on back.'

"By the time we had finished breakfast and got away, it was rather late. But when you found us we were tied up along the bank. We learned that there were a large number of Nepali herdsmen starving in the forest just at that place. Some of them had died. So we had stopped and sent men in to see if we could help them. We did all that was possible, and then had a conference. While Swanson comes from Viking stock—you know he is a Swede—he is not fond of the water. In addition to

this we had found that we would not have enough kerosene in the tank to make Dibrugahr if we had to continue to buck the fierce current—you remember how stiff it was. Even your large steamer could barely make way against it in places. Well, we decided that it was the part of wisdom to turn back to Dihing rather than go on and be tied up indefinitely beside some tiger-infested jungle.

"I started the engine and backed the boat out into the stream, but in throwing the gear into forward, I stalled her; and there we were with a dead engine and out in a foaming, raging river! Swanson had learned to steer on the way up, but I was the only hope for the engine. I asked him to keep a lookout while I tried to get her to go, but as there was trouble we finally put the anchor down, but the current was so strong that it dragged, and we kept going slowly with the stream!

"I worked like a Trojan to get the engine started. Happening to look up in the midst of this, to wipe the sweat out of my eyes, I saw Swanson holding on to the wheel, turning it back and forth, and all the time watching the boiling river. Great trees were coming down, if one of them had hit the boat it would have meant the finish of our trip! Every time another appeared Swanson looked at it, shook his head and gave the wheel another turn; having no headway and being anchored, the rudder had no effect, but he kept turning! Finally we did get started and headed back down the stream, and it took just half an hour to cover the same distance that had required three hours to do going up! We did not try it again but had the *Mishing* towed up by a cargo steamer. Swanson remarked: 'You told me that you would show me the time of my life. Well, you've showed me enough to last for a couple of them!'"

When Leonard and the Padri were parting that evening on the Kollung, the Captain remarked again: "I'm going to have a try at the Company to see if they will not get me that launch. Let me have the particulars. I'll let you know what they say."

"Right-o," answered the Padri. "Cheerio, and a good run."

In the course of time the deal was completed, and the *Mishing* was taken over for his work. His duties superintending the Indian pilots who were connected with his service, kept him on the river nearly all the time, and the launch seemed to promise to be a great convenience.

Meeting a friend some time later, the Padri inquired whether he had seen Leonard and his new toy recently.

"Didn't you hear? He was nearly drowned by that boat a short time ago," answered he.

"You don't say! How was that?"

"Why, he was taking it up the river, and to save time, as well as to save running the engine, he had fastened her to the side of one of the fast Despatch steamers which happened to come along. As they were going up-stream, he went down into the boat and took one of his men along to teach him how to run the engine. When he was stooped over the motor he happened to feel a little surge and looked up. To his horror he saw a wall of water filling the entire front part of the cabin; it picked him and his man up and washed them both through the long passage-way and out the back door; and by this time the entire launch was under water! Swimming to the surface, he came up sputtering, and, feeling something on his shoulder, turned his head to see what it was—and there sat one of the chickens that he had had in the coop on the stern!

"How it happened, no one knows. Probably the rope at the bow had worn through, and a wave had caused the head of the launch to dip under the water. But, though they spent days in searching, they never found a single scrap of the *Mishing!*"

The great river in Assam in its wild moods is fierce as an insensate beast. Many times large country boats, and even steamers and cargo-carrying flats have sunk and the sand has engulfed them absolutely.

After Leonard had steamed away up the stream, the evening he had had tea with the Padri and the Memsahib on the Kollung, a curious thing happened. It had grown late, and the old cook, Mafiz, having told them that the dinner was ready, they decided to eat before finishing the run into Nowgong. When the meal was over they started out, as they thought, down-stream toward the town. After running along for a full half-hour, the Memsahib said,

"Dear, those lights over there seem to show that we are going the wrong way."

"Surely not," said he.

But as they kept on and there was no sign of the town, after a while he said to her: "I wonder if you were not right, dear. Say, let's have a look at the current. There is not much of it, but it will tell us when we stop."

Shutting off the engine, when the boat lost headway and then came to a stop, it began to turn round. Looking at it the Padri said:

"Well, did you ever! We were going up instead of down all the time! You were right. We forgot to turn after we had dinner."

Having done this it was not so very long till the lights of Nowgong came into sight and the *Grace* was tied up on the bank near the court.

The Deputy Commissioner of the District, Dawson, was a Scotchman, and the joke was too good to let pass. It was many a day till it was forgotten. And as it happened that the Padri had a little Scotch ancestry they could both take a joke at the expense of one of the finest races on earth. One day Dawson said,

"Padri, why do we Scotch not dare to look up our family trees?"

"I can't say. Why?" innocently asked the Padri.

"Oh, for fear we'll find some of our ancestors hanging there, mon!" laughed he.

Mrs. Dawson had been as charming a lassie as had ever come from Bonnie Scotland. She was a delightful hostess. Her husband was from Aberdeen, but she was from Glasgow. On account of the reputation that Aberdeen has for parsimoniousness, every one likes to tease a man from that place, and Mrs. Dawson was no exception. One day she teased him about the only foreign merchant that had ever lived there. It is said that he starved to death because he could not make enough money to get away to Glasgow! But he thought that was a slander!

One evening at dinner, knowing her predilection for "pulling Aleck's leg," the Padri, who was sitting beside her, asked,

"Have you ever asked Dawson why the Scotch eat salt, instead of sugar, on their porridge?"

"No, but I will." And she called across the long table:

"Aleck, why do Aberdonians use salt, instead of sugar, on their porridge?"

As he sat thinking seriously, she turned to the Padri and said quietly, "What's the answer?"

"It's cheaper-r-r-r!"

And when her husband gave it up and asked the reason, he roared louder than the rest.

When Foreign Secretary Robbins visited Nowgong he found Dawson a most delightful fellow. Naturally, the Padri took Mrs. Robbins and the Doctor to call on the Government officer, and the two men seemed to take a liking to each other. When they were leaving the bungalow, Dawson said to Robbins:

"This has been a pleasure, Doctor Robbins, but altogether too short. Can't you come over and have a real 'buck' before you go?"

"Ah—yes, certainly!" said Robbins, looking just a little uncertain. "Can we arrange it for tomorrow?"

"Fine!" said Dawson. "I'll look for you about this time. Cheerio."

As soon as the car was out of hearing-distance from the compound, Robbins turned to the Padri and said, rather anxiously,

"What in the world is a 'buck'?"

"Oh, that means a little 'talkee-talkee' that's all."

Robbins' face cleared up and he said, with relief in his voice, "I was not quite sure whether it was a whisky-soda or what, but I wasn't going to let him know it!"

It is men of the type of Dawson—clean, upstanding, efficient administrators—who have governed India so well during the past hundred years. Due to them there is peace, education, and all the blessings of modern civilization available to those who desire them. Up to the time of the Reform Scheme which is being experimented with at this time, these men did really rule their Districts. The common people considered them as their friends, called them *Ma bap* which means "mother and father." This is changing rapidly now. The Civil Service is coming to be

an office job, and these men, though efficient and honest, are tied down to desks by tangled webs of red tape.

And while the power of the officials was great in the plains, yet on account of the different method of administration for the hill-tribes who live on three sides of the Brahmaputra valley, their power in the mountains was almost absolute. Among some of the tribes they had practically no difficulty, while others have been very hard to handle. But the Mikirs who live in the lower ranges that border the Nowgong District were of the former type. Having given no trouble they had very little done for them by the Government. Not even a bridle-path has been opened into their hills, but the other tribes that have been willing to fight, have had roads of all kinds opened through their territory in order that troops could be moved about.

In addition to having no roads—making the tract very difficult of access—their hills are full of wild animals, but this type of danger has never been a factor in keeping missionaries out of any field. Moore of Nowgong became especially interested in the Mikirs and urged that men be sent among them. A temporary residence was built at Tika, which is on the main path from the interior of the hills to the plains' markets, and his brother P. E. Moore lived there for some years. Carvell was another of the men who gave his life for that tribe.

One of the amusing experiences that Carvell had—though it might have been serious—was when a leopard became too bold and took to visiting the neighboring village so regularly that the goats, dogs, and chickens even were practically wiped out, for they were his favorite food. The people prepared a trap, dividing it into two parts. It was constructed of saplings planted deep in the

ground, so that the animal could not dig under them and escape, and the top was bound together with many wrappings of strong cane. In one compartment a live goat was placed, but the wall was so strong that the leopard could not get at it from the other side; the other part had a door that was held up by a catch which would be released when the leopard would enter that side trying to get the goat.

The next morning the people came running to Carvell, calling even before they reached the bungalow:

"Sahib! Sahib! We've caught it! Bring your gun!"

"All right!" said he. And leaving his morning tea unfinished, he took his shotgun and loading it with ball cartridges, ran along with the excited men.

When he came near the trap he could hear the beast growling and throwing itself from side to side trying to break the trap. It was angry on account of the people who had gathered and used teeth and claws to tear the thing to pieces; but when Carvell went near to shoot it it shook the trap till it looked as though it would come to pieces. Putting his gun to one of the cracks between the saplings he fired at the animal's head, and when he shot it fell down without a sound.

"*Aiao!* Whoop!" shouted the men and boys.

They opened the door, and as the tail of the leopard was the part nearest, Carvell seized it and had pulled the beast nearly out of the trap, when, to his astonishment, he saw that it was getting up! In telling of it later, he said:

"I looked around for the gun, but it was too far to reach. The people seeing the animal on its feet were running in all directions, so I did the only thing that came to my mind, just held on to the tail and pushed him back

into the trap and slammed the door! The first bullet had merely stunned it, but I made sure of the second!"

Above all the other stations in Assam, Tika typifies the hard and lonesome in disinterested service. Few places in Assam have more sad associations than this isolated hill, and it was not on account of the attractive, manly qualities of the Mikirs that the work was carried on. They are above all else a gentle people. There has been no need for large expeditions to conquer them. As with most of the hill-tribes they are straightforward. In fact this is characteristic of all these races, and may sometimes embarrass, as happened to an English officer among the Garos who live farther down along the same range of hills. This gentleman was in the Forest Service, in charge of the Reserves in the Garo Hills. He was a clean, keen fellow, especially temperate in his use of alcohol, and so much interested in the people that he was studying their language.

Coming into the station one day, he met the Padri on the road. They were good friends and had spent many a pleasant hour together. It was evident that he was nursing a grievance of some kind, for he looked quite annoyed.

"What's the matter, Old Man?" asked the Padri. "You seem to be upset."

"Well, who wouldn't?" he snorted. "What do you missionaries teach these Garos anyway? *Do* you tell them that a man that takes a drink will go to hell?"

"Not a single drink, at any rate. But tell me what has happened, and perhaps I can explain our teaching in connection with whatever occurred."

"Well, it was this way. I was coming down the road. Saw a naked Garo and stopped to talk to him. I'm studying the language and wanted to practise. I asked him

Photo by G. R. Pawsey, Esq.

TYPICAL HILLMAN

The Portion of the Necklace in Front of the Throat Is Made of Two Boar's Tusks. This Man Served in France During the World War

where he was going. He asked me the same. I told him. He told me. I asked him where he lived. He said in a Christian village. Asked him whether he was a Christian. He said he was. Then I asked him if he drank home-brewed rice beer. He said he didn't; go to hell if he did! I asked him would any one who drank go to hell. He said they would. Told him I drank and asked would I go there; and he said I surely would! I'll be darned if I'll have a naked Garo tell me I'm going to hell! Now what do you missionaries teach them anyway?"

Smiling a little at his wrath, and yet feeling that he had merely received what he had asked for, the Padri said:

"Our teaching in regard to alcohol merely confirmed the Garo Christians' own experience. These simple people had found that it prevented men from understanding the teachings of Christ, and that they could not remain faithful Christians if they took part in the drinking bouts in their villages. In fact they already knew that it was a bad habit-forming indulgence from which no good of any kind arose, and more than this, that it was a detriment to right living. They knew that a large proportion of the murders, quarrels, and adulteries occurred when men were under the influence of drink. Did you know that many of the tribes altogether forbid the girls and young women to drink, regardless of how much the men may use? Well, these were the reasons that led to banning alcoholic liquors from the community.

"Incidentally, it just occurs to me that this opinion of the people is borne out by the figures gathered by the police in one of the plains' districts. The Superintendent told me just recently, that in making a study of the crimes of violence in his District, which has a population of nearly

eight hundred thousand people, ninety per cent. of these crimes were committed under the influence of drink!

"The observation of the early Garo Christians had been similar to this, and as it also accorded with the thought of the missionaries, they required that any one becoming a Christian must give up drink entirely. But the churches are entirely independent of the Mission. Their organization is congregational, and no one, be he missionary or what not, has any power to enter any local church to teach or preach even, unless he has the permission of that body. The rules of the Garo churches in regard to drink are entirely their own. They are in accord, however, with the accepted doctrines of the Baptists."

"Well," growled the officer, "I don't like to be sent to hell by a naked Garo!"

But it was simplicity of this type that had led to the opening of the work for the Mikirs. When the Padri was stationed in Nowgong, the brother of the Nowgong Moore (P. E.) was living at Tika, the station that had been opened for them, and he and the Memsahib decided to pay them a visit. When they saw the place they marveled at the courage that would keep white people in that lonesome spot. It was impossible to get a wheeled vehicle within twenty miles of the foot of the Tika hill, and to go around by boat from Nowgong required days.

The Padri and the Memsahib went by road to a place called Kampur which is sixteen miles from Nowgong. There they hired two elephants to take them across the jungles and swamps direct to the hill. The owner promised to have them ready shortly after sun-up the following morning, but it was nearly noon when they arrived, and almost one o'clock when the goods was loaded on the one and the people on the other, ready to start.

Toward evening they reached the densest part of the great grass jungle which bordered the deep swamps. There were tracks of wild buffalo, tigers, pigs, and any number of deer along the way. The day before this, a wild bison had been seen near the place, and, just as the *mahout* was telling of it, there was a crash and a rush through the high grass at the side of the track! Evidently the bison was still there, and it was a relief that he ran away, rather than toward the elephants, for the bison are so fierce that they will sometimes charge even these great animals.

It was dark when the river which runs near the hill was reached. All this time the storm-clouds had been rolling and billowing up in the west. The sun had gone down in a glorious blaze of crimson and gold; but inside an hour the clouds had covered the entire sky and were driving in toward the Naga Hills which were not far away.

Pushing the elephants as hard as possible, they had come to within a short distance of the Borpani Tea Estate which is on the river of that name, and a few miles from Tika Hill, when the storm broke. The elephants had been excited for some time. The almost continuous roll of thunder and the flashing of the lightning seemed to make them very nervous, but a peculiar, steady, drumming roar in the clouds overhead affected them most of all. Looking up at the exceedingly black cloud which seemed to be like a wave, the *mahout* said, "Hail." This had been the chief cause of the elephants' unrest. They had sensed it before duller human ears had understood. The night had become pitch dark. Only by the flashes of the lightning was it possible to obtain an occasional glimpse of the path. Then the storm broke! Great gusts of wind swished the bamboos till they lay almost flat upon

the ground. Palm-trees bent over till they were snapped off, and great limbs of other trees were whirled through the air like straws. Then the hail and rain! Big stones pelted the uncovered heads of the *mahouts* and elephants, till both men and beasts groaned together. Umbrellas were whipped into uselessness. Fortunately for all the party, the hail did not last long, but the rain, which was like a cloudburst, drenched and chilled every one till all were shivering and their teeth rattling as though they had ague.

Happening upon the houses where some of the coolies who were employed on the garden lived, with much shouting against the roar of the wind they were able to find the road to the Manager's bungalow. Watson was in charge of the garden at the time, but his house was entirely dark, for every one was in bed when the wet and bedraggled procession arrived. Although the rain was over, the wind was still blowing, and it required loud calling to stir them out. But when they did hear and understand what the unusual noise meant, they were kindness personified.

"Come in, come in," called Watson. "This is about the last thing we were ever expecting to rain down! But you are entirely welcome."

"You are surely kind-hearted to take in strangers at this hour of the night. I am the Padri from Nowgong; here is the Memsahib, if she is not altogether melted away!"

Just then Mrs. Watson came to the door, saying: "Well I'm surely delighted to see you. But you poor thing," she said as she caught sight of the Memsahib who was also drenched to the skin, "you'll take cold that way. Come right in; I'll have a hot drink for you at once."

By the time they had changed into dry clothing, the cups of steaming Bovril and a lunch were ready for them. But it was very late when they had finished talking and the house had again settled down for the night. In no place in the world is hospitality more generous than on these lonesome gardens. Except for the Moores as they went back and forth to Tika once in two or three months, practically no white people ever came to the Borpani Garden. Even a couple of half-drowned missionaries made a pleasant break in the deadly monotony! But it is such outlying posts of civilization that are unintentionally playing a great part in changing this wild frontier of India into a modern nation.

The visit to Tika left a sad impression. It had been twenty years since the missionaries had come to the hill-top. They were filled with zeal and a desire to give to the Mikirs that knowledge of spiritual things which would be the forerunner of real culture and civilization, but lonesomeness and sickness, sorrow and death have been their reward. The little bungalow now stands desolate and decaying. Spiders, lizards, and snakes make it their home. The orange grove, the *lac* cultivation, the fruit-trees, and the vegetable garden are submerged by the all-conquering tropical jungle; and three lonesome graves are hidden by tangled vines. Two of these are the graves of missionary wives. First Mrs. Carvell, and later Mrs. P. E. Moore died. It is always hardest on women in Assam. But there is the grave of one man there—Carvell, who had spent many years in the country but had really retired, and then came back alone, when there was no other missionary there, but was taken ill and died with no comfort save such as the few kindly Mikir Christians could give. He loved the people, he lived for them, and among

them he died in Tika—the most lonesome of all the Mission stations in Assam; and yet to those who loved it, and literally—as did their Master—gave their lives for the people, it was eternally worth while.

While it is true that the advance of modern civilization is opening up the land, making roads and putting speedy vehicles on them, yet these things have not driven the wild life from the land. Not so many tigers and leopards are seen on the road as in the old time when it was more the usual thing, than the unusual, for the planters and others who rode along the few roads after dark to see a bear, a tiger, or some such animal. The beasts have adapted themselves to the more noisy traffic, but they are still in the jungles.

When the Padri was camping about halfway between Nowgong and the railroad, before the new branch line was built into the town, Dawson wrote a note asking if he could be given a lift over that portion of the road, as he was going out on tour. His own Ford was out of commission for the time being. After they had had dinner and taken him to the station about eight miles away, as they were leaving him to return to camp, he said:

"Many thanks for the help. I only hope that no tiger gets you."

Several weeks later when he again saw the Padri, he asked him:

"Well, how did Lizzy behave on your way back from the station that evening?" As that was in the days when cars were rather new in the district, inquiries in regard to their health was the rule.

"Oh, the car ran beautifully; but do you remember wishing us luck and hoping that we would escape being chewed up by a tiger?"

"Yes. Why? Did one come after you?"

"Almost! We were on that one piece of road that is permanent when it happened. It is a pleasant place on which to get up a little bit of speed after the bumps of the rest of it. It was fully dark by the time we got there, so we had the headlights on. Just a half mile or so beyond its beginning, where the road is built up about six feet, I saw something running in the grass along the roadside, a short distance ahead. It may have been a hundred yards in advance when it came into the glare of the lamps.

"'Look there, dear!' I said to the Memsahib. 'There's a fine leopard for you!'

"'Oh, isn't it nice! Do stop! I want to see it,' she called.

"Think of that! And I had nothing in the car to shoot with, nor even a stick to shake at it!

"'Not much!' I said, and I put on all the gas there was, but I had to hoot the horn to make it move out of the way, for it had stopped on the road and was looking up along the beam of light from the lamps. As it was, we passed within three feet of it as it leaped aside!"

"That's interesting," said Dawson. "It was just near that place that a tiger ate a pony while it was still hitched to a buggy."

"Come now! That's some tale. It sounds like spoofing."

"Never-r-r a spoof, it's true entirely! Some five years ago it was, when the Manager of a garden was driving along there in a buggy. Just there near the bend in the road, his pony began to jiggle about, but no thought of fear occurred to him. He knew that tigers roamed all through the forest that is on both sides of the road, but as the two side-lamps of the buggy were lit, and as wild

animals are supposed to keep away from any kind of fire at night, he spoke to the pony to quiet it and thought no more about it for the moment. It was an hour after sundown, and as there was no moon, the space outside the little light from the oil-lamps seemed black as pitch. In addition to the light, the fact that so many people were in the buggy with him was another reason that he had no thought of danger. In addition to his wife and little child, the *syce* (the groom), and the baby's nurse were both riding on a small seat back of the hood.

"In order to bring the pony to obedience he was just reaching for the whip, when to his horror, he saw a tiger that looked as big as an elephant, rear up beside them! He saw its open jaws come down on the neck of the pony—there was a quick twist—a snap of breaking bones, and the pony sank down without a sound—dead!

"They were all too astounded to make any move or noise; and as they sat quite still, the planter still holding on to the reins, the tiger dragged the pony straight off the road and down the bank. The buggy and its occupants were pulled along! Sitting down beside the carcass, the tiger calmly proceeded to begin its meal.

"Excepting to raise its head and growl a little as the baby was handed back to the nurse through the rear of the top of the buggy; and to glare as the two grown people followed, with fear and trembling, the brute paid no attention to them. Walking as quietly as possible, they started back to Ballijuri garden. They were not molested though they feared that the mate to the tiger might be about. The memory of that experience gives them nightmares to this day. When you were at the garden the other day didn't you notice a silver-mounted inkwell made from a pony's hoof?"

"On the verandah writing-table? Yes, I did see that."

"Well, *that* was the hoof. They poisoned what was left of the carcass the next day, and got the tiger too. He was old and mangy, and his teeth were much worn. That is probably the reason that he took to killing other than wild game. The hoof makes a nice ornament. They had a silver shoe put on it too. It is really quaint."

"As one good turn always deserves a better one," said the Padri, "did you ever hear the wild story of the two bears over in Mongoldai, Dawson?"

"No, that one is new to me. What happened? In this country nothing is too wild to believe, for many of the tales are true."

"Anderson-Smith, who was the manager of Korinmore Tea Garden, and three friends, were driving to the steamer landing above Mongoldai on the Brahmaputra, to take the steamer to Tezpur. They were in two cars as none of them had a five-seater. As there was no breeze, and as the dust made by the leading car remained close to the ground, Anderson-Smith and his friend drove slowly at first, so that there would be time for the others to get a distance ahead to give the dust a little time to settle. On this account it happened that they were several miles behind when they came to that crooked place in the road on the other side of the town of Mongoldai. You've been over the road—do you remember the place? It is where there are so many clumps of bamboo on both sides—a real crooked place."

"Yes. Yes. That's where I stuck in the mud so bad. The shade from the bamboos never lets the sun dry it up in the rains. They should be cleared out."

"Well, it was just there that the men in the second car noticed that the road was all trampled and kicked up.

Quite a cloud of dust seemed to hang over the road, but they pushed right on. They had heard that a rogue elephant has been seen about the neighborhood, and had no desire to meet it. When they came to the temporary road that went off to the right to the landing they turned in and on arriving at the place were surprised at not finding the first car there.

"'They must have missed that turning in the dark. It is a new one,' said Anderson-Smith. 'I'll turn the car around so as to throw the light from the lamps up the road, it may help them to spot the place when they come back.'

"His surmise proved to be correct. Within fifteen minutes they saw the other car coming down the rutty track.

"'Hello, boys! Where's your other light? You're blind of an eye!' they called when the car stopped.

"But the men did not answer, in fact they were so shaken that they could not talk till they had had a stiff whisky peg. Then they told what had happened.

"'As we were coming along that crooked bit of road on this side of Mongoldai we could not make much time because it is so crooked. As we turned round one of the clumps of bamboo that are right on the edge of the road we saw two pairs of eyes shining in the glare of the lamps, about a hundred yards ahead. We saw that they belonged to two bears which were walking on the road toward us. No sooner did they see the lights than they growled and started for them! The distance was too small to give us a chance to get up any speed, and there was no place to turn. So we put on all that we had and just as we were about on them both reared up on their hind legs. We hit them fair in the middle. The one was

knocked over and rolled down the side of the road, crawling away into the jungle with his hind legs dragging—must have hurt his back. The other was knocked flat under the car, on his back, right under the front axle. And there we were with a dead engine!'

"'You should have heard him roar! He bellowed and bit and clawed the car—look there at it—bashed out that lamp and lifting the whole front part up in the air simply shook it! We could do nothing so we just sat still. We had no gun or any other kind of a weapon; and we could not tell how soon the mate would again come from the jungle to help. It seemed like an hour, though it was but a few minutes, till the bear found that he could move sideways and crawled out. He went off into the jungle growling to himself.'

"'As we had no self-starter, we said to the car-boy who was sitting in the back:'

"'Go, turn the handle.'

"'"Oh, Sir, I'll be killed! I'll be killed!" he howled.'

"'So, with many a glance at the jungle, I got down and started her up. We had only the one light left and that's the reason we missed the turning.'

"It was very strange, but seemingly as the result of the experience the nerves of both the men were shattered. Within a year one of them died, and the other had to retire from India!"

"Well," said Dawson, "if you were not a Padri, that would sound like a jolly fish story. But I suppose that we must honor the cloth!"

"The cloth! Bosh!" said the Padri. "That one was not a patch more interesting than the aftermath. Did you hear of the other two bears that Davis met not so very long afterward?"

"More and worse? A-weel, shoot, mon!"

"True as fact, Old Man," smiled the Padri. "Naturally, that story spread all over the country on that side and for a time every one thought of meeting bears every time they drove out after dark. One exceedingly rainy night when 'Short Davis'—there was a 'Long Davis' on the same garden—was returning from the Club with a friend, on the way to their bungalow near the Korinmore factory, they were driving in his little, ancient, one-lunger Swift car. They had just turned on to the pebbled drive, of which there is seven miles, and were breathing a sigh of relief because the mud and the splashing and skidding were past, when Davis said:

"'Say! What's that?'

"His friend looked up the road and said: 'Bears! As sure as you live, two of them!'

"A short distance ahead two pairs of eyes, several feet from the ground, glared savagely at them! They could not go back. The road was too narrow to permit them to turn. They had no gun of any kind along, and they could not stand still and permit the bears to come and chew them up! So they slowed down, shouted, rattled the gears and tootled the little horn—and to their relief the glaring eyes turned away—but the animals started walking slowly ahead up the same road. They crawled along after them at a snail's pace. In the darkness they could see the wet bodies shambling along. They looked enormous too; but if perchance the car would get a little too close one or the other of the gleaming eyes would turn around and look at them as much as to say, 'How dare you?'

"This process continued all the seven miles. It rained harder, they would get too close, the bears would look

around, they would fall back—the same game over and over; till they came to the factory itself, where, to their infinite relief, the animals turned off toward the coolie lines; and then they saw that the two, enormous, fierce, black 'bears' were nothing else than two old, bony, tame buffaloes belonging to the garden!"

"Padri," teased Dawson, "you get worse and worse all the time. If this were not India no one could believe it."

And it is true: All the country is a land of paradoxes. There are holy men who are saints, and holy men who crawl with vermin. Nowgong is but a replica of every other part of Assam. Holy secrets are guarded with life if necessary; they are shouted aloud on the streets! Magic and charms rival modern medical science, and superstition grins at the efforts of Government as it seeks to introduce honest administration, and at the missionaries who seek to implant the high idealism of Christianity—but Nowgong has nothing but reverence for *Hadu* Moore Sahib (The Holy Mr. Moore), and it has been the living exemplification of the highest ideals that the world has ever known, that has hastened the change that is evident in the outlook of millions in the land.

IX

A HEAD-HUNTER'S PARADISE

Christianity has never remained satisfied to permit the men of the wild places of the earth to perish in their savagery, but in the process of putting over the message its missionaries have had experiences with shipwreck, distress, beasts, and more beastly men that astound the luxury-bound generation of the present day.

From the day when Brown and Cutter and their young wives had passed Gauhati in their little boats on the four-months' trip from Calcutta to Sadiya, fifty summers had seen the great Brahmaputra rise in mighty power and roll its two-mile-wide flood, thirty feet deeper than low water, down to join the even greater Megna and Ganges, before finally falling into the sea. For the white men and women in the valley there had been fifty summers of suffering in the sweltering heat; of fever the origin of which was not known; of torture from the countless insect pests, mosquitoes and sandflies especially; the fire of prickly heat had seared the tender skin of the little children: the summers of the years had been made up of days of toil in discomfort and nights of restless sleep on beds wet with perspiration from weary bodies.

Fifty winters had also passed over the land; each one had brought the cooling, snow-kissed breezes from the beautiful ranges of the Himalayas. The very earth itself seemed to rejoice in the richness of the Great River's bounty; the fields yielded their abundant harvests and the trees added their rich, tropical fruits to feed the millions

of the valley's dusky children and the strange, pale, white foreigners.

During all these years the missionaries had toiled in their lonesome stations. Railroads there were none, and the side-wheeler steamers were very slow in their paddling up and down the Brahmaputra. Little ones were born, many of them were buried with no help or comfort to sorrowing mothers save such as might be given by the few loving, ignorant converts. During all these years the number of the mission force had been growing gradually, but there had never been a meeting; in fact, because of the lack of roads and means of transport it would have been exceedingly difficult and expensive for them to get together. But as the year 1886 marked the fiftieth year since the work had begun, and as communications had been much improved, it was decided to have a Jubilee, which was the first of the conferences which have now become the Annual Conference of the Assam Mission.

There were but nineteen missionaries in the country at the time, and they were all present at Nowgong for the meeting. The Masons and the Phillipses—the apostles to the Garos, from Tura; Gurney and Moore—God's pens to write the Assamese Bible for modern Assam; Rivenburgh and Clark—his servants who invaded the paradise of the head-hunters in the Naga Hills, and with whose experiences these chapters chiefly deal; these and all the others of that noble band who, immediately following the very first workers established the foundations of the growing indigenous church of Assam. Missionaries of these later days can never know the type of heroism required in those pioneers. Nor can modern religious workers and leaders who live in a day of conferences, meetings, and retreats till there is a surfeit of assembling and talking, pos-

sibly realize what such gatherings meant to the isolated missionaries of fifty years ago. Only as the stories fall from their lips can the missionary of today obtain even a slight glimpse of their hardships and of their joys.

It was not till many years after that first Conference met that the Padri had one of the rare opportunities of a lifetime, the privilege to hear personally from one of the old-timers some of the astounding things that had happened in the course of his own experience, and which were but illustrations of the many occurrences which the pioneers of the early years witnessed.

Clark, of Impur, which is in the Naga Hills, was sitting with the Padri in the drawing-room of the bungalow in Gauhati, one evening during the last Conference which he attended in Assam. It was but a short time before the end of his long years of service. He had never been a large man, and the hard work as well as the suffering of the years had taken a heavy toll of his strength. This evening he seemed tired and shrunken. His white hair and pale face bespoke a weary body, but his eyes told of a spirit keenly alive. He was in a reminiscent mood and began to tell the Padri of his early days among the Nagas, and how God in his providence had used the most peculiar means to establish and to confirm the faith of his little children.

"When we were at Sibsagar," he said, "I was in charge of the work in the Press. It was at that time the largest, in fact, the only one in all Assam. We had our hands full with all that came to us to do. In addition to the monthly paper *Arunadoi,* we did all kinds of other printing. The slow presses were worked by hand, and the men we used were slower than the presses! We had to cast our own type, make our own blocks and woodcuts,

CEREMONIAL DANCE

The "Daos," or Small Axes, Which are Seen Are Used in War and Peace. Note the Bits of Cotton Stuck Through Holes in the Ears of the Dancers. As Often as Not a Flower Is Used

and do many such time-consuming things which modern printers know nothing of. But I liked the work. It was indeed a pleasure to help open up the world of men to the Assamese, in addition to the more important work of opening windows into heaven and uncovering the face of God for them.

"At this time there was a boys' school being conducted for the children of the Christians and also for any others who would come. One day when I was there examining the classes, some wild Nagas came to the door. These men were down from the hills to trade as was their custom during the cold seasons. They were short, sturdy men; naked but for a small apron, and to our eyes, ex-exceedingly dirty. But in spite of this, the flowers and bits of white cotton which were stuck in the holes that were cut through their ears showed a love of beauty. The red and black goat's-hair on their spear-shafts also bespoke appreciation of color. When we learned, however, that some of the long, black hair that hung from the lower part of the decoration was from the heads of women they had killed, and that the red color of the goat's-hair was also a sign that they had taken human heads, the charm of their color-scheme faded considerably!

"As they crowded around the door, the odor from their sweaty bodies and the reek of their short-stemmed pipes which several continued to smoke, was anything but sweet. They stood peering in at the children who were studying and reciting.

"'See,' said one smiling, 'those children talk to the white and black things they hold in their hands!'

"'The black and white things' were books and slates.

"'Aiao! They tell the grown-up man the things they say also! It is most wonderful!'

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"Becoming interested in these simple people, I learned a little of their language, and as they knew some Assamese I was able to talk with them. One day the leader of a party came to me and said:

"'Come up to our village in the hills, Sahib, and teach our children to talk with the books.'

"'Not much,' I answered; 'I prefer that my head decorate my own shoulders rather than that my skull should grin from the front of a house! You know that you live in a head-hunters' paradise, and a white man's head would be such a special prize that mine would desert me in a very short time!'

"During the next few months the number of parties coming to see the school increased. Time after time they called on me and insisted that I go with them to the hills. I refused every invitation for I knew that there was no security there. Still I longed to help them. I saw that they were anxious for something better for their children than they themselves knew; and they believed that they saw the ideal in the work which was being done for the children on the plains. But as for me, the risk was too great to be taken at that time.

"One day an exceptionally large delegation called at the bungalow. Some of them I knew, but others had come for the first time. Among the faces was one that especially impressed me. It seemed to show intelligence and power above the ordinary, and I found that he was the head chief of his very powerful village. Sturdy, upstanding and fearless, in the dignity of simple manhood he stood out from his followers. Stepping forward, after the customary salutations, he said:

"'Sir, we are the men from the town of a thousand warriors. We come to request you to return with us in

order to teach our children the way of knowledge. Though we ourselves are too old to learn, we will give you our children that you may teach them the new way.'

" ' In the great council of all the warriors, we considered carefully your fear, which my young men reported to me, that, on account of the many wars among the villages you fear that your head might be taken in some raid by an enemy. Sir,' and he spoke with a dignity of power and assurance, ' we, the men of the town of a thousand warriors guarantee to protect you.'

" Such a call as this was nothing else to me than the voice of the Master calling me to a great, though hard, bit of service. I could not refuse, so, after discussing ways and means with them, I promised to visit their village. On account of very pressing work in hand it was not possible to leave immediately, and as it turned out, it was six months before I was able to get away from Sibsagar. In the meantime, to my surprise, Godhula, a young Assamese Christian, volunteered to go with them immediately. Knowing as I did that the Assamese are not now a warlike people, but on account of the oppression of the Burmese and the misgovernment of their own princes they are cowardly, knowing this I was surprised, to say the least.

" ' But,' said Godhula, ' I am a Christian, a servant of the Master and in his name and strength I can go with them. You will soon come, and then we can work together.'

" Thus it happened that the Assamese young man was the first to carry the story of the Cross into the hills. When the time came for me to go personally, I approached the Government officer and asked his permission. It was the courteous thing to do, but it was more

than courtesy. In order to uphold the dignity of the Queen and the honor of her Government, should any white man be killed by any of the hill-tribes it would be necessary to send an expedition to punish them and to put the fear of the law into them. No sooner did the Deputy Commissioner understand the purport of my request than he said:

"'A man would be a fool to go into the Naga Hills. His head would be off his shoulders the first night. A white man especially! No indeed, there can be no permission from Government for you to go, and what is more, it would be my duty to restrain any one trying to cross the line.'

"From his standpoint he was right. But my Master had first place, and His command was of the greater importance. As the Nagas had no calendar except summer and winter, seedtime and harvest, the daily journey of the sun and the phases of the moon, they fixed upon a certain time of the moon in the month of December, 1872, as the date on which they would come down to escort me to their village, Dekha Haimong. Knowing that the Deputy Commissioner would prevent my going should he learn of it, I slipped across the border between dark and daylight, and by the next day was far beyond the authority of any earthly government that had power to stop me.

"During the early years in the hills we lived in constant fear of raids from the many villages which were at enmity with our first Christian village—Molung. This little town had come out from Dekha Haimong. When those who had not become Christian saw that the new faith was opposed to the old demon-worship, they feared that the failure of the new village to do the devils honor might cause them to break forth and destroy them all.

What had led to the founding of the new village was that the Christians refused to continue to support the rites and sacrifices which were considered necessary to propitiate the evil spirits that caused illness and destroyed crops. They also refused to take part in the drinking-bouts that accompanied these feasts. They had no faith in, nor respect for the old witch-doctors; and they even asserted that the old wizards had no power anyway! As the community increased the oppression of the non-Christians intensified till finally the twenty families of believers were able to endure it no longer and with fear and trembling established the new village.

"As this was done against the wishes of Dekha Haimong it meant that they had not only made an enemy of the parent village, but they had inherited the enmities of all her foes. In addition to this as Dekha Haimong was now an enemy to Molung, all the other villages that were allies of the parent village were enemies of the disobedient offspring also! In reality they were absolutely alone so far as help from man was concerned; not one village in all the hills dared be friendly with the outcasts. The entire story of how they were protected and grew strong in the midst of a hostile world is intensely interesting but too long to tell now, but there is no doubt that the Father did watch over his children.

"Realizing time and again that a power beyond that of men protected them, their faith grew strong, but at times it did look dark indeed. Within several years of the founding of Molung, a few villages had begun to be friendly because they were impressed by the teachings they heard, but more than this, by the peaceful lives of the Christians and by the wonderful immunity they had from destruction by all their powerful enemies. Gradually con-

tacts were made with these villages which showed a desire to be friendly. The men from one of them especially urged me time and again to come and visit them, but knowing that head-hunting was carried on all about, and having found the articles that give warning of intended attack lying in the path near the village a number of times —they had been placed there by our enemies during the night—I was careful not to give any skulking warrior a chance to acquire my top-piece. But the chief of this friendly village assured me personally that he would hold himself responsible for my protection, and I was thus persuaded to go with him.

"We arrived at his place during the afternoon. My one servant was given a small house in which to cook and sleep; and I was taken to the house of the young men—the bachelors have a separate building in which they live. That evening we all sat around the fire, for it was cold on that mountaintop, and I was explaining to them the benefits which faith in Jesus would bring, when there was an interruption caused by something that was happening at one of the gates.

"As are all Naga villages, this one was situated on a hill that was easily fortified and defended. There were two gates which had very heavy wooden doors which were closed every night. The walls near them were very high, and the paths which led to the gates were narrow, with deep ditches on both sides, and these were planted with pointed bamboo stakes set close together. Day and night there were guards on duty, and young men were told off to sound the great drum in case of attack.

"The quiet at one of the gates had been broken by the sudden, loud challenge of the guard. Some one was coming up the hill! Every one in the village was instantly

alert. The men rose and grasped their spears, which were never far from their hands, ready to rush to the defense if necessary. They loosened up their battle-axes and stood listening intently. Raiders from enemy villages were constantly prowling about hoping for a chance to get a head, and not knowing but that the information that the white man had come to their village had been spread over the hills by drum-signals, the chief thought of the possibility of an attack on that account.

"There was an answering hail from the party coming up the hill. They were a party of young bucks from a village friendly to this one who were out on a wife-hunt. If they could steal a girl, all in good humor, no particular harm would be done. But the chief came back from the gate, to which he had immediately gone, in great agitation. He signed to me to be quiet and led me quickly to a small house near-by. Taking me inside he whispered:

"'I'm so sorry. I heard the guards talking to the young men at the gate and know that this party is from a village much stronger than mine, but though they are friendly to us they are your enemies. If they learn that you are here, nothing in the world can prevent them from attacking us and taking your head. I am undone! I have no power to protect you! Keep quiet, I will do all that I can.'

"Going out, he quietly passed word around that nothing was to be said as to the presence of the white man; but with little hope that it would not slip out. The guard at the gate opened the doors, and the strong party filed in and were given seats around the fire, where they sat chatting, telling the news of the country about and drinking the inevitable rice-beer that was immediately produced.

"In my dark hut I scarcely breathed. If I ever prayed

for my life it was then; but there seemed not the remotest possibility but that with tongues becoming loosened by the drink some one would let out the news about their remarkable visitor. A long half-hour dragged by; my heart jumped every time a rat ran across the floor or one of the chickens which were roosting up above shifted its position!

"Suddenly the challenge of the sentinel at the other gate rang out in the dark—another party was coming up the opposite side of the hill! In answer, the young men of that band shouted gaily. They were friends also; in fact another lot of young men led by the lure which has fascinated young men from the beginning—the desire for a partner—and they had heard that there were a number of marriageable girls in this village. But, no sooner did the men of the first party hear the answer to the hail of the guard than they sprang to their feet, quickly seized their spears and disappeared in the darkness down the other path. The reason was that the second party was from a much larger village which was at bitter feud with their own, and they were too few to stand against them, so making wisdom the better part of valor, they abandoned the field—and my life was saved, for the last party was from a village that was friendly to Molung, my own village!

"The chief came at once to the hut. 'Come out,' he called. 'These young men are your friends. They are allies. Come out. There is no danger now!'

"His face was wreathed in smiles; and I could not but thank my heavenly Father for my life. If there had ever been a direct answer to prayer, God gave it that dark night when there was no hope aside from his intervention.

"Many things which have happened during these years have been used to confirm the faith of the Christians and

NAGA WOMAN AND HER SON
They Are Wearing Ceremonial Dress

to spread their teachings. When we had lived in Molung for several years and the threats of our enemies had failed to frighten or harm us, other families plucked up courage and joined us. The prosperity of the village was also a very great attraction. Rice was no longer wasted in brewing great quantities of beer, and the result was that every one had enough to eat during the entire year. This in itself was noteworthy, for it was a very common occurrence for people to run short of rice before the next harvest, and then for some reason or other our fields seemed to be especially fruitful.

"But one day calamity overtook us. It was the first great test of faith so far as the old demons were concerned. Two women had gone to the clearing to work. They were stooped over busily digging with their short-handled hoes when a tiger sprang out from the thick jungle, near which they were, leaped on the nearest woman and with one blow of his paw killed her. Picking her up in his jaws, he carried her away to eat. The other woman ran sobbing to the village and told us what had happened.

"According to the old faith the family would now have to abandon their house and every last iota of their possessions. It would all have to be left till it rotted. No one would touch it, for the curse of the devil possessing the tiger was upon it. But none of these things was done. At a meeting of the church the same day, it was decided that the tabu of heathenism did not hold for Christians, and this was a very great victory. The family continued to live in the house and to use their possessions and nothing untoward happened them.

"As soon as they heard the woman's story they came to me and said: 'Father, that tiger must be killed. A man-eater is really a living demon of destruction. Every

second or third day he must have a new kill. If he lives we cannot remain here.'

"After considering what to do I said to them: 'Yes, that is true. That tiger must be killed, but how? It will be exceedingly dangerous if you try it with spears and axes, and I have nothing but a shotgun. The only way I can think of that will not endanger more lives is that I put poison into the body and that the tiger be permitted to eat more of it and thus be killed.'"

The old man sat quiet for a long time. Though it had been many years since the tragedy had happened, yet the thought of it made the tears roll down his furrowed cheeks.

"She was a spiritual child of mine," he murmured as he wiped his eyes. Continuing he said:

"The people agreed to the plan and early the next morning we started for the place. The men were armed with spears and axes, and I carried my shotgun. We had no difficulty in finding the place where she was killed. There was a deep mark on the soft ground which she had dug up with her hoe as she worked. The tool was lying where it had been knocked from her hand, and a few dark stains told the rest of the tale. The trail from the field into the jungle was very plain. The grass was pressed down and aside, and made a clear track, for the tiger had made no attempt at concealment. We formed in a line; they placed me in the center, and, with their spears balanced in their hands ready to thrust, we advanced cautiously. Sharper eyes than mine are required to spot a tiger. The stripes and the yellow blend perfectly with the grass and shadows interspersed with the lighter stems of bamboos or brush; but we did not need to go very far till we found the poor, mangled body partly eaten. Putting

some strychnine into it we came away and waited for the morrow.

"Early the next morning we went to see if anything had happened. Going in the same formation as before, we followed the trail to the place where we had left the body the previous day. It was gone. We saw the track over which the tiger had dragged it away farther into the jungle to make another meal of it. Never having used strychnine before I had not been sure of the correct amount to use. If too much of it is eaten an animal may be made sick immediately and, vomiting it, may not die. With this uncertainty in mind we advanced very slowly, stooping and peering under the high grass. We moved with scarcely a sound and finally came to the little that remained of the body. The tiger had gone away, but whether he was near-by watching, ready to leap out on us we did not know. Going at a snail's pace we came to the place where the grass was trampled in a great circle. The poison had evidently begun to work! Going on still more carefully, every spear-arm tense to strike, my finger on the trigger of the gun—suddenly one of the men pointed. Every one stopped stock-still, and the man who had spotted the tiger through the stems of grass, looked long and carefully, and seeing no motion, not even the flick of the tell-tale tail, he said in awe, 'It's dead!' Shouting with joy they surrounded the beast, and after examining it, carefully prepared to carry it to the village.

"After having buried the little that remained of the woman they built a platform, and propping up the tiger on it as though it were alive, they carried it around to the friendly villages telling them how the power of the Christ had delivered them. This was one of the first outstanding occurrences that aided them in their fight with superstition.

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"Another somewhat similar incident was of great help to them. The Nagas eat the shoots of the bamboo as a vegetable. These are like giant asparagus that comes to be seventy feet long and as much as ten inches thick! In the early summer rains when they are just sprouting up—a foot in a day—they bring them in by the basketful.

"One day a party of women were coming up the hill to the village having their baskets on their backs filled with shoots. The path was narrow, and they were traveling single file. As you know, the headband that goes around under the basket on the back, causes them to stoop forward in order to take a part of the weight on the head but throw most of it on the back. While climbing the steep trail the last woman in the line felt something tug at her load. Quickly pulling the band off her forehead she looked around in time to see an enormous elephant just lifting a sprout out of the basket. Traveling silently on his soft, padded feet, he had come right up back of her unheard.

"Womanlike, she left out a yell, dropped her load, as did all the rest and they ran for the village as fast as their legs could take them! When the men heard their story they came to me, 'What shall we do, Father? This is a rogue. Having been driven from the herd he has taken to hunting men for easy food. His lack of fear is evident. He should be killed.' And, as though it were an afterthought, which most probably it was not, they added: 'And it would give us such a grand abundance of meat!' The Nagas are fond of meat of most any kind—age and condition make absolutely no difference!

"'Very well,' I answered. 'It is now evening. Prepare food for the morning, and we will start at dawn and see what we can do.'

"Starting with the first light of day we went to the place where the broken fragments of baskets told how after eating the sprouts the surly brute had trampled and torn the baskets into shreds in his unreasonable rage. It was not hard to find or to follow his trail. But it seemed as though that elephant knew that he was in for it! He had made a bee-line away from that spot! We followed him up-hill and down-dale, through forest, thicket, and swamp, over mud and rocks. The sun came high in the heavens, and still we sweated on; it descended toward the west, and the track still led away. We stopped to consult, and came to the conclusion that the only thing to do was to turn back as we were so many miles from home and it was now evening. Suddenly one of the men said:

"'Listen! There it is! I hear it pulling and eating the leaves of that clump of bamboos out there!'

"Looking through the trees we saw that he was right, though the elephant was on the opposite side of the clump we had no doubt. The trail was leading directly there from where we were standing. Forming into line, we moved forward whenever the animal was pulling at the leaves and thus making a noise so that any sound we made would not reach him. Going along in this way we came to the very edge of the tree jungle, just about forty yards from the bamboos. Somehow the elephant scented a strange smell and came out around the clump looking toward us and waving his great ears trying to catch some sound also. While the sight of these animals is poor, and he could not make us out as we stood like statues in the brush, yet their hearing and scent are wonderfully keen.

"We were outside the larger trees and could not take a step without being seen, so I decided to have a shot from where we were. I had nothing but the double-barreled

shotgun, one barrel was choke bore and was loaded with buckshot, but the other was smooth bore and contained a ball cartridge. Lifting the gun I pulled the trigger to fire the ball, but the thing merely snapped! Seeing the movement, the elephant started to turn to run for it. Knowing that it was no use to try to kill him with shot, I thought:

"'Well, I'll teach him a little lesson anyway!' and fired the buckshot at him, and to my astonishment, he fell down like a log!

"'He dead! He's dead!' shouted the Nagas.

"'He's not!' I yelled, trying to stop them as they rushed forward. But the fact was, the animal *was* really dead—and he had been killed by one, single buckshot! We found this after a long search. The little ball had happened to enter the ear, follow the nerve cavity through the thick skull into the brain, killing him instantly!

"Hastily cutting off some tidbits to carry back—among which were the trunk and the soles of the feet—we hurriedly started for home. Travel as hard as we could, it was way in the night when we came to a hilltop several miles from the village, but from which it could be seen during the day. Gathering together, the men shouted the old war-cry which a victorious band returning with loot would use.

"The weird call echoed over the silent hills, but we were too far away to be heard. Going on to a hill that was nearer, the wild cry rang forth again, and this time the answering welcome shout from the young men of the village guard reached us faintly, but we could see the people rushing from the gate with lighted torches in their hands, winding down the crooked path like a stream of great fireflies, as they came out to meet us. There was surely

great rejoicing that night; a dangerous enemy had been slain—and also the morrow promised an abundance of meat!

"The next day the whole village, men, women, babies and even the dogs, went out to cut up the carcass and bring in the flesh. It was a regular picnic till in the course of the process, one of the men emerged from inside the ribs where he was working, with a black, gristly ball about the size of a man's head. No sooner did the fellows outside see what he had than they shouted, 'Devil! Devil!' and ran as though the devil himself were after them!

"The young man dropped the ball and ran also—but not far. As he told me the story later, he said:

"'Yes, I did run, because every one else did. I was suddenly afraid. But I did not run far. It occurred to me: "Why are *you* running? You believe in Jesus and know that there are no devils that have power to hurt you. Shame!" So I went back to see what the thing was.'

"There is no question but that this took great courage, but this young fellow was one of the leaders and had shown himself especially keen and fearless. Still, the superstitions and tabus of a lifetime were not easy to overcome. Returning to the place where he had dropped it, he took the ball up and cut it open with his knife. Inside it he found the iron head of a large arrow, over five inches long, such as is commonly used for the traps which the people set along paths frequented by elephants. It was evident that here was the reason for this one having been separated from the herd. When, some years before, the arrow had been shot into its lungs, it would have been weak for a long time and unable to keep up while Nature in seeking to protect the

lungs, was forming the gristly covering over the foreign body. This is similar to the method by which the pearl is made in the oyster, but I had never known it to occur in a large animal. The result of this experience was that superstition was struck another blow, and that the faith of the people was strengthened. Even now, with the very large Christian community, there is still the same battle, but with the growth of spirituality and intelligence the fight is easier. They are surrounded on all sides by non-Christians, and just across the border to this day, in the area not administered by the British, head-hunting is still the great diversion of the villages. But there are schools, churches, and Christians in practically all the towns that crown the hilltops in the Ao land. The outstanding question which is now agitating the leaders of the community is as to the form of church government they should follow; how to spend the large amount of money they have in their treasury for benevolence is another, while the problem of education follows as a close third! Superstition is fighting a losing battle, but those who live in America and know that some even in that enlightened land throw salt over their shoulders, touch wood and so on, will not marvel that it is not wiped out—but they will wonder at the advance made by a simple people whose fathers' hands were stained with blood from gory heads."

NAGAS IN DANCING ARRAY

The Spears and Axes Are the Same as Are Used for War. The Long Hair Seen on Spears and Decorations Is to Represent Women's Hair Taken with the Heads

X

HEAD-HUNTER DIGGERS

The peoples of the Brahmaputra valley have been harassed for ages by the raids of the head-hunting hillmen from the ranges of mountains which run parallel with the river on either side. One of the many tribes, the Garos, who call themselves, *A'chik*, which means "man," but who have been labeled "diggers" by the people of the neighboring plains, because they farm by digging with hoes instead of plowing the ground—this tribe lives in the low ranges of hills in sight from the Goalpara bungalow.

Bong Laskar was one of the wildest of the young savages of this tribe some sixty years ago. He would lead bands of the young bucks to attack villages on the plains in the hope that they might obtain a head or at the least a good haul of loot. The British Government was just then consolidating its hold on the country, and there were no troops to spare to police the hills. But when the Garos began attacking survey parties sent out by the authorities, as well as villages, and as no flouting of authority could be permitted, it was found necessary to send a small force to punish them.

Bong and his men saw these "barbarian outlanders"—as they called them, though they themselves wore nothing but a strip of cloth four inches wide as their full dress!—they saw them taking up and pointing hollow sticks at them, and causing the sticks to spit fire. But there was not much fire, and little smoke, what were they to fear? They knew nothing of guns, for up to that time bows

and arrows, the spear and a heavy knife were their weapons. Did these white men and their few black servants think for a moment that they could frighten them with a little foolish magic!

Said Bong: "Who's afraid! It may be a fire-spitting devil, but I can fix him. Just watch me!"

Cutting down a plantain (banana) tree, he unrolled the wet layers of which the trunk was composed and made himself a shield.

"*Chut!*" said he. "This will damp their fire!"

Holding his shield before him so that it covered his entire body, with his spear in his right hand, he boldly advanced against the police. Raising his rifle, one of them fired, and the bullet, going through the soft, wet fiber of the plantain stock, dug a hole in Bong's brown hide.

Aiao! he yelled, and dropping the shield, he ran as fast as his sturdy legs could carry him. Seeing that the "devils" possessed by Government were by far the strongest, the Garos submitted to the inevitable and have since that time been peaceful as well as prosperous.

After some years Bong became a Christian. He was as energetic in his new faith as he had been in his old demon-worship. While his theology was simple he had the courage of his convictions. Among the non-Christian Garos there is a belief that after death every soul must go to a certain hill called *Chikmung* and abide there for a certain time. Devils of various kinds are supposed to live in the hill also, and any one not having died who would venture to invade their dwelling-place would never escape alive!

Bong was rather up against it one day. He had argued that there were no devils, it was all imagination any way—but the people wanted him to prove it. Finally he said:

"Very well. You say that *Chikmung* is full of devils. I'll go up tomorrow and prove to you that it is all foolishness. You'll see that they have no power to harm. Jesus will protect me."

His own family plead with him not to go, for though they had become Christian, the old superstitions were too fresh in their minds. But in spite of this he started out at sunrise next morning and disappeared in the jungle that covered the hill. Such audacity had never been heard of, and the non-Christians feared that it might cause the devils to break forth and destroy them all!

As the day wore on and evening fell his own family became more and more anxious. Should he not return they would not only be exposed to the taunts of their neighbors, but their new religion would be shown to have less power than the old demon worship. Just about dusk when they had almost given up hope, and when the others had begun to make taunting remarks, Bong came tramping down from the hill. All ran to see him. "Did the devils bite you?" "Did you see many spirits?" "What happened?" A whole series of questions were put to him by his excited friends and now very meek neighbors; but he was too tired to answer. It was a high steep hill; there had been no food or water on the way, and the day had been very hot, but he said:

"Not a single devil! There were thorns, jungle and all that; there is plenty of good land for us to cultivate . . . but do give me something to eat and drink."

Such an action took great courage; but with natural fearlessness backed up by the spirit of the new Master, Bong himself and the Garo Christians following him have succeeded in overcoming much of their old superstition.

Some years before the Garo Hills were taken over by

the Government, Mason and Phillips, the first missionaries to the tribe, came to Goalpara and lived on the hilltop while they were learning the language and also until they could find a more convenient location. Their nearest white neighbors were at Gauhati about a hundred miles up the river, which was the headquarters of the troops for the lower end of Assam. Among the soldiers then as well as now, were a number of Garos. It has always been the policy of the British to recruit from the local tribes whenever possible, and there have always been some Garos who have joined the police or the army in Assam.

It came to pass that through the men of this tribe among the troops in Gauhati Christianity was first made known in the hills. Some few of them could read a little, but there was very little literature of any kind available. The Mission Press at Sibsagar in the far upper end of the valley had put out a few books and tracts. It had published the first newspaper in the Assamese language, which is a tongue of Sanskrit derivation that is used by the peoples of the plain of the Brahmaputra. *Arunadoi* was a Christian newspaper and contained, in addition to articles on religion, the news of the world and a record of outstanding discoveries and inventions of the day, but aside from these there was practically no literature available to the people.

During this period two young fellows, Omed and Ramke, had seen a recruiting party at the weekly market to which they had gone to buy salt and other such things which they could not purchase or produce in the hills. They needed to buy no clothing, for the Garo style then, as well as now, decreed that the proper dress for the non-Christian is a strip of home-woven cotton cloth four feet long and four inches wide! For the woman, fashion pre-

scribed that the cloth be ten inches wide and just long enough to fasten around the waist. This leaves the thigh and the rest of the body uncovered, but the tribe as a whole is very moral; much more so than many other peoples who cover the whole body with layers of clothing. In reality, the fact is that clothing or the absence of it has practically nothing to do with the morality of any people. The mental or spiritual attitude is the controlling factor entirely.

Seeing the uniforms of the recruiters in the marketplace, Omed said to Ramke:

"What's the show? Let's go and see."

They joined the crowd that had gathered around the party and listened to the *Subadar* (lieutenant) as he was talking. Seeing their interest he spoke directly to them:

"Say, brothers, you should come and join the great Queen's army. You are young bucks, and you want a little excitement in life. You will be taken all over the world, and in addition to your food you will receive a salary. See my uniform! You will each have one like it and a hat too, just like a *sahib* [European]. But let me tell you something better than this, you will be given a rifle and learn how to shoot it. Is there any one in your village who can do this? We have come from Gauhati. Have you ever seen it? Have you seen Goalpara or Dhubri?"

As the two young fellows were rather ashamed before such sophistication and knowledge they merely shook their heads. Warming to his theme the *Subadar* said:

"Have you ever traveled on the great ships that sail on the great river? Why, we go on them always! Yes, brothers, if you want to see the world just join the Queen's army!"

All this intrigued the young fellows and, as a result, they both did join up. Several years passed, and the glamor had somewhat rubbed off. The wonderful rifles were found to become very heavy on a long, hot march, and the much admired uniforms were found to chafe spots that had never been used to any kind of a covering. By this time they had seen quite a number of places in Assam and had become accustomed to the steamers on the Brahmaputra.

Being located in Gauhati they went to the bazaar by the riverside one evening to buy tobacco and other little necessities, as well as to help pass the time, for they were off duty from the middle of the afternoon till sundown. Seeing a piece of printed paper lying on the ground Ramke picked it up and looking at it said:

"Why! It's Bengali! We'll take it along to read."

Since joining the army they had learned to decipher the characters, but there were so few books and no papers available that any chance scrap to read was eagerly devoured. This which they had found happened to be a part of a tract telling of Christianity and assuring those who would accept Jesus as their Saviour, that they would have freedom from sin, peace in the heart, and no fear of demons, gods or devils, in which every one believed.

Seeing in this just what they had longed for, they went to the missionary who lived in Gauhati and inquired more carefully whether it was true, and it was not long till they believed and were baptized. Being filled with a great desire that their own people in the villages should have the same peace that they had received, they left the army and became the first evangelists to the Garos. All this happened just a little over fifty years ago, but within this period the entire tribe has been influenced by the idealism

of Jesus, and the Christian community numbers over thirty thousand.

Up to the time that Ramke and Omed began their work in the hills Mason and Phillips continued to live at Goalpara. It was not safe for them to enter as the Government could not insure them protection. But after the punitive expedition which met Bong, it was decided to open up a station at Tura and to form the Garo Hills into a District with regular administration. This was done in 1869, and several years later the missionaries also moved to that place. The location selected was fourteen hundred feet above sea-level, forty miles inland from the Brahmaputra and through the densest kind of jungle. The road was a mere track, but with the aid of large numbers of villagers to carry equipment the trip could be made in four days.

Looking out from the spot selected for the Mission Compound, the land spread before the eye in rolling waves of hills as far as the sight could reach. On the edge of the world to the east, the mighty river ran, a mere silver thread among the green. Back of the Compound, towering nearly three thousand feet more above it, rose the higher mountain that offered its cool top as a relief from the fierce heat of summer.

They had thatched houses built until timber could be collected for the permanent bungalows. These small buildings were not very high off the ground, but there was little fear of the wild animals or men though both were all about.

One day Mason's little boy, Walter, was playing on the veranda that was along the front of the house. His father heard him call out as though something unusual were coming. Rushing out, he saw a rogue elephant com-

ing toward the child, and now but a few feet from the veranda. He had no gun with him, and there was no time to get one. A rogue elephant is a destructive demon, wild and unmerciful in his rage; and there was not even a club or a spear near! On the other end of the veranda there was a pile of sticks of firewood; without a second's hesitation, seizing one of these, Mason rushed at the brute shouting at the top of his voice, and hit it a blow over its extended trunk!

Never in its life had the elephant been so treated, and by such a puny adversary! The blow on its sensitive proboscis stung worse than the hornets that at times attacked it when feeding in the jungle, and, whatever the association, it turned with a squeal and started to run! But Mason was so angry that he was not satisfied with merely turning it away, he stayed with it raining blow upon blow, beating the hind feet as it ran until it was going so fast that he could not reach it. Unwittingly he had pounded the most sensitive spots in an elephant's anatomy, the trunk and toes, but he had saved not only his son but his house and the lives of all that were in it, for the intelligence of such a living tornado as a bad elephant becomes helps it make a complete job of what it begins when the lust of destruction is on it.

Even to this day there are very, very many wild animals such as tigers, leopards, wild dogs, and snakes without number in the Garo Hills, yet in all these years no missionary has ever been injured by them. A friend was once visiting the Masons some years after they were settled in their new bungalow. On account of the heat of the night every one slept with all doors and windows wide open. In the morning the friend said to his host:

"Were you not able to sleep on account of the heat?"

"Why, no, I slept very well. Why?"

"Oh, during the night I heard some one walking on the veranda; he passed my open door back and forth and once stopped and looked in. I thought it was you and turned over and went to sleep again."

"I wonder ——," said Mason. "Let's go and see."

Going to the side of the veranda on which the guest-room door opened, they found the tracks of a very large tiger! It had marched back and forth, back and forth; and had gone to the door several times and stood looking in, as the pugs plainly showed! Yet it had done no harm.

But probably the most unbelievable thing that ever happened in Tura was when two good-sized snakes tried to swallow each other.

One day when Mason was sitting in his study a Garo came to the door and said:

"I found two snakes up in the mountain. They were swallowing each other."

"What did you do?"

"Oh, I killed them and pulled them apart. Here they are outside."

Going out to see, Mason found that it was true. From the marks on the skins, where the teeth of each snake had scored the other, he saw that they had really been swallowing each other. They were not poisonous but of the rat-hunting variety. He measured them and found that the one was six feet seven inches long, and the other seven feet six inches long—just the reverse in feet and inches. He also measured to find out how far each had been swallowed by the other. It was interesting, for it turned out that the process had gone on so far that when they were killed the tail of the largest was inside its own mouth—but inside the other snake!

The Garo is a keen, likeable chap. He has a well-developed sense of humor, as was shown by the interest and amusement that led the man to kill and bring in the two snakes for the Sahib to see. They appreciate the Mission and have been very ready to adopt the good things which have been brought to them, whenever possible. A certain amount of medical work has always been done by the missionaries, even before a qualified doctor was appointed to the field. Simple medicines such as painkiller for stomachache, ointments for skin diseases, etc., were quickly appreciated and are widely used through all the hills.

But the most interesting application of the modern knowledge to practical conditions happened while Doctor Ahlquist was located in Tura during his first term of service. One day he was in the hospital and saw two Garo boys come up outside. They were carrying a large, none-too-ripe jackfruit as big as a good-sized watermelon. One boy came in while the other remained outside the door with his fruit, and producing six annas (twelve cents) laid it on the table and said:

"A bottle of painkiller, please."

"What's the matter? Are you ill?" asked the doctor.

"Oh no, Sir," said the boy, "at least, not now. But we know that, as you have taught us, if we eat jackfruit that is not very ripe we will surely get a pain in the stomach. But we have discovered that the medicine cures the pain, so we are going to take a good dose beforehand and then we can have a good feed—Um-m-m—and no stomachache!"

This tribe has also shown its appreciation of the religious teachings brought to them by the missionaries. The Christian community is entirely self-supporting.

They receive no help from the Mission for any part of their church work. In addition to this their Association has sent out men as missionaries to related tribes in other parts of Assam. For some years they supported two evangelists among the Abors in the hills on the farthest border of Assam nearly five hundred miles away. This latter tribe is probably the most fierce of all the head-hunting races occupying the hills that surround the great valley.

During one of their annual Association meetings the Padri happened to be present, though the Garos were not the people for whom he was primarily working. The evening when Apinda, one of their missionaries to the Abors, gave his report can never be forgotten by those who were there. This Association was held in a village in the foot-hills on the northern side of the range, not very far from Goalpara. Fourteen hundred delegates were present, and many of them had trudged up- and down-hill, five- and even six-days' journey to get to the meeting.

The low grass-covered huts which had been prepared for the people to sleep in were all filled, and the forest rang with the laughter and songs of the young people as they visited together. The hall in which the sessions were held was a mere shelter made of branches of trees planted in the ground and bamboos supported in the crotches which had been cut for the purpose. On this framework leaves and grass had been spread as a little protection from the heat of the sun by day and from the very heavy dew at night. It was just high enough for a man to walk about freely beneath it. The ground was covered with straw on which the people sat.

In the evening the great space was but dimly lighted

with numbers of little, smoking lamps. A stranger from America coming upon the scene at night could easily imagine himself at a meeting of the head-hunting clans who were discussing their next raid on the cowardly but wealthy plains-dwellers. In the shadows, the dark, heavy faces seemed to wear a stern and forbidding expression. As it was, numbers of the men present had seen their fathers come back from a head-hunting raid and could remember the joy of especially the women and young girls, as the men would arrive, yelling and dancing and waving the bloody heads; and these were as often as not the heads of women and children!

Were not women and children easier to catch?

But, looking toward the elevated platform at the front of the meeting hall, which was lighted by a good kerosene lamp, as well as a number of lanterns, the bright, keen face of Bosin who was the chairman of the meeting, and the busy, capable secretaries as they sat at their tables writing the minutes—all these gave an entirely different impression. There were several other missionaries present, their white faces showing palely against the far back side of the enclosure. They had no official part in the work of the evening.

Presiding with tact and grace, the president conducted the meeting as well as any American chairman could have done. And, excepting that the language used was the Garo, there was very little difference in procedure or method between that Association and the many that are held annually in the United States.

There was a choir of boys and girls. The richness of their sweet, unspoiled voices, backed by strong, open-air, hill-climbing constitutions, gave a volume of rich harmony seldom found in a sophisticated audience. The

hymn in which they led, set to a tune which is familiar to Christians the world round, rang out through the forest and echoed back again from the darkness of the surrounding hills.

The reverence of the audience, bowing their faces to the ground, and their united, fervent "Amen" at the close of the prayer, bespoke a reality of soul experience arising from a real communion with the unseen, yet present Father.

After the reading of the minutes of the preceding meeting, the chairman called for the report of their missionary to the Abors; and Apinda arose and stood in about the middle of the meeting-place. He was a short, sturdy young man, rather dark in complexion. His features, like all his tribe, were Mongolian in character, for the Garos are one of the Thibeto-Burmese tribes which are all related to the Chinese. Ages before historical times they were thrust down the Brahmaputra valley, forced on by stronger tribes behind them, but having come to the last, low range of hills overlooking the hot plains of Bengal, they stopped there and have made these "Garo Hills" their home for the ages past.

When Apinda began to make his report for the work he had been sent to do, there was a tenseness of attention which showed how deeply the Association was interested. Adressing the chairman, he said:

"Mr. Chairman, brothers and sisters: It is now two years since you sent me in the name of our Saviour, Jesus, to take the good news to the wild Abors living in the mountains beyond Sadiya. With the help of Mr. Jackman, the missionary, a place has been found in a friendly village on the border of their hills, and I have been living there up to this time.

"I find that these people are indeed and in reality our own brothers. They are like us in feature, their customs are very similar, and their language has many words that are exactly the same as ours. In addition to this I found that they worship devils which are just the same as those which are worshiped by those who are not Christians among our own tribe.

"Of course, in many things they are different. On account of the danger of raids from other villages there is always a strong, high palisade around the hilltops on which their villages are built. This is an advantage in a way, for it keeps out the tigers and the leopards, and also prevents the cattle and goats belonging to the village from straying away. But oh, the mud! In the rainy season the narrow lanes between the houses become almost deep enough to drown a cow!

"I found the people very kindly in disposition, except when drinking their home-brewed rice-beer, or when the blood rage was on them; at these times they are fierce and dangerous. Their age-long feuds keep many of the villages from any intercourse and also cause them to persist in the cruel practise of head-hunting.

"Their weapons are very similar to those of our own people. Their sword is somewhat shorter, but the spear is the same. As you all know the bow and arrow are not now in use among us, but the Abors wield them with deadly effect. Their arrows are small; some have little, pointed iron heads; others are just of bamboo, sharpened, and hardened in the fire; but all are tipped with poison. It is horrible, I am afraid of them! The poison is made from different materials, one kind being concocted from the bodies of the stinging ant (formic acid). When the arrow merely scratches the flesh the poison enters, and the

pain is terrible; but if the point pierces under the skin the notched head breaks off, and in a short time the animal, or the man, is dead!

"These people are really very wild. They do not as yet understand the power of the British, but think that they themselves are the greatest people on earth! You may not have heard, but just recently they killed Williamson Sahib [Mr. Williamson] who was the British Political Officer in charge of the frontier, when he took a few Indian soldiers and a party of carriers and went up the Lohit River. This stream is in reality the Brahmaputra coming through the great mountains of eastern Thibet, and the Sahib was anxious to see whether there were any waterfalls in its course.

"For many days the party made its way slowly along the edge of the stream; sometimes on the narrow strip of sand between the water and the thick forest, but more often on the steep sides of the hills and along the gorges through which the water flows with the roar of thunder. Day after day they had cut their way through the almost impassable jungle such as we never find in our own hills here. The forest is exceedingly dense, the vines are like great cables, and the thorns of the cane hook and fasten it all together.

"One evening the party came to a beautiful, glistening valley tucked in between two large hills on which there were Abor villages. As was his custom, the Sahib sent for the chiefs and asked them to come to his camp for a conference. Many days before this, the word had been signaled from hilltop to hilltop, and these villages, as well as all the Abors of the entire country knew that the expedition was working its way into the heart of their hills. They knew the number of the soldiers, how many

carriers there were—in fact practically everything that there was to know about it. Sharp eyes had watched every step of the way and had spied on every camp. Speculation and rumor were rife. It was feared that the Government intended to open up a better road into Thibet which was just on the other side of their border, and if this were done it would take from the control of their chiefs the most profitable traffic which passed through their areas and which paid them a large tribute. Other stories were that it had been determined to conquer the Abors and use them as slaves—all kinds of wild rumors were rife and were reported from village to village. The chiefs were surly and suspicious, and though they came to the conference, yet they would not agree to furnish guides or carriers.

"As they sat in the council they saw all the evidence of [to them] wealth and comfort which had been brought all these many days' journey. Glistening tin boxes filled with clothing, dishes, and table-linens, chairs, beds with wonderful blankets as soft as the snow; but especially the rifles carried by the Indian soldiers took their fancy. And then the Sahib himself had a little gun! Not one of these things escaped their sharp eyes; and covetousness began to take hold of them. The conference was a failure. The Sahib could not speak their language, and the translation was not any too courteous. At last they left without having come to any agreement.

"On their return to their village they held a war council and decided to attack the camp and enrich themselves with all the wonderful possessions, as well as to give an opportunity to a number of the young bucks to take some heads, for they were old enough to marry but a number had not as yet been able to bring in even a

woman's top-piece! And it was all the fault of the British too, for were they not giving protection to the plains' villages from which it had always been easy to get heads? Here is the chance, so they reasoned, to rid the land of the enemies of the peace and enjoyment of the Abor peoples. So, mustering several hundred warriors they fell on the little party in the darkness and killed every one of them except two of the carriers who escaped. Ah, but they brought their own destruction on their own heads! A large army with great guns that roared, in addition to a forest of the smaller rifles, went into their hills, burned their villages, and killed a large number of their warriors. The man who had speared the Sahib is in prison and will be hanged."

The silence of the great audience was intense. Every one hung on the words of the speaker. Only a little chirp of a sleepy bird in a tree outside, and the burring of a few crickets, broke the stillness of the night. Apinda paused for a moment as though in mind he could see the dark, bloody scene. Continuing he said:

"Oh, friends, realize the great need of this people! They are proud but sit crushed by the darkness of ignorance. Their nights are times of fear. Devils possess not only their land but their hearts. Their witch-doctors delude them and fatten on their fear, and there is no escape for them except in this same Jesus who has brought us up out of the mire of the very same pit. You every one know it!

"During these years their attitude has changed. They now listen with respect when I tell them the wonderful story of the life of our dear Master who gives love and light in the place of darkness and fear. Some few have believed, and I can see the evidences of their faith, but on

you alone the responsibility of giving them all the chance to be changed from being the worst wild men on the frontier to the sanity which is found in Christianity. You must pray and give. I will return, though it is a lonesome and a strange land to me, but I know the presence of my Master who is my strength and shield."

After he had sat down the people sat in silence for a long time. Though the Garo is rather stolid and not given to the expression of his emotion, yet tears streamed down the faces of old men who knew only too well from their own experience the hopeless horror of the darkness of a devil-haunted life of fear. Finally a great sigh, as though from the heart of the entire audience, seemed to bring them back from the thought of that land of need to the business of supplying the oil to keep the light burning.

Many questions were asked of Apinda, funds were voted for his work for the coming year, several reports from local evangelists were heard, and the meeting was dismissed with prayer following the doxology. The people went to the shelters in unusual silence, for the impression of the evening was still strong upon them. There was not the usual jollity and laughter among the young people, but, late at night when all was silent and the brilliant stars twinkled through the trees to a sleeping earth, a voice was heard in one of the huts, and it was one of the oldest of the Christians whose father's hands had been stained with blood before he learned of Christ, praying aloud. He talked with his Master, told of the need of the people in Abor land, and again plead that his Spirit might give them light.

XI

MUMBO JUMBO'S MASTER

But a short hundred years before Judson the great pioneer missionary to Burma arrived in Rangoon, when the glory of the Ahom kingdom across the border in Assam was at its height, Rajah Rudra Singh, the father of Sib Singh, was attacked by fever. Believing it to be the work of demons, but chiefly of the god Jvar, he made great sacrifices to all the spirit hosts of heaven and earth. He gave gifts to the Brahmans, especially to his family priest, Krishnaram, to whom he gave control of the most sacred shrine on the hill Nilchal, the modern Kamakiya near Gauhati. While the chief divinity of this holy spot was, and still is, Kamdev—the god of lust—yet other gods had their place, and the game of pretending to play one against the other brought very great gain to the priests. Many of the ceremonies were orgies worse than the demon cruelty of the cult of Mumbo Jumbo in darkest Africa.

In spite of the Rajah's faith and works the fever did not abate, and his son, Prince Sib Singh, ordered the high priest to perform the supreme sacrifice; and in the dark of night, with horrid secret rites and ceremonies, young men were sacrificed and their dripping heads were brought as offerings to appease the demon god. But even this did not suffice, and Rajah Rudra Singh died.

Immediately following the funeral ceremonies, Prince Sib Singh returned to Rungpur, which is Sibsagar, and was crowned King of the Ahoms; but the legacy of magic

and misery remains on the Kamakiya hill, formerly known as Nilchal; and even up to modern times secret human sacrifices are said to be made in the shadow of the Union Jack and within the sound of the church-bell on the Mission Compound in Gauhati.

The one great factor in overcoming the deadly darkness of the old animism which is the basis of very many of the practises and superstitions of Hinduism, is the spread of Christianity in the land. While it is true that the greatest success has been had among the less advanced peoples, the impact of the high idealism of its teaching has influenced the thinking of the entire priesthood as well as the more intelligent laity. Christian churches have sprung up by the hundred, and the Christian community in Assam alone numbers one hundred and fifty thousand. In the Baptist Mission, which is but one of the bodies working in Assam the churches are self-supporting and are organized into Associations in their particular areas. There is also a general organization, the All-Assam Convention, which is as yet more of a seed than a tree; and yet, to change the figure, it is the final part of the skeleton structure that is necessary if a permanent building is to be erected.

The changes that the centuries have wrought in the land since the day when Sib Singh left Gauhati to return to Sibsagar, were most strikingly illustrated when the Convention met in the former town in 1926. Morning and evening the temple gongs rang from the summit of the hill as it still stands overlooking the beautiful land. With the rising of the sun the priests chanted the hymns that woke the gods to the facts that the day had broken and that they should now be prepared to receive the offerings of their worshipers. In the dusk of the departing light sonorous texts from the Holy Scriptures mingled in the air

JOGI GHOPA ROCK

One of the Holy Men's Caves Which Are Carved in the Face of the Rock

(See Page 27)

LINGA STONES

Symbols of the Phallic Worship of the Hindus Such as Are Seen Throughout India

with the ringing of the church-bell as it called the Christians together for the evening service.

It is scarcely realized that the Christian community in Assam, and in many other lands, has developed into an efficient, and to a large extent self-propagating organization. While it is true that it is small, compared with the hundreds of millions who have not accepted the teachings it propagates, yet the fact is that should every missionary be withdrawn from the Orient, the Christian Church would live. It would be stunted, its development would be retarded for centuries perhaps, but it would not die, because it has come to self-consciousness, and is organized.

The methods followed by the Indian Christian community in carrying on their work, were shown when the Garos connected with the Mission in the Kamrup District, of which Gauhati is the headquarters, invited the All-Assam Convention to meet there. Technically the local church was the host, but as it is small and could not possibly carry the burden alone, the Garos, who are for all practical purposes *the* Association, agreed to be responsible, and their men came from twenty to thirty miles to help arrange the huts and to assist in catering for the more than four hundred delegates who attended.

Among the men of many tribes and races who came were some with wrinkled faces and thin gray hair who had in their youth taken part in head-hunting raids. Many of the older Garos and Nagas could remember the fear in which they lived as children when hostile men from enemy villages often lay in wait near the springs which were the water-supply of their homes, and where some of their mothers and sisters were found with their heads cut off. Among the different peoples represented in the meeting were Bengalis, Assamese, Ahoms, Kacharis, Mikirs, mis-

sionaries from America and England, a motley collection so far as race was concerned; a regular Babel of languages; but a body of men and women united by one spirit and one purpose. A majority of the delegates were first-generation Christians; but the marvel of the ages is the immediate influence of Christianity on the peoples who accept it. Not only does it give them an assurance of faith which changes their entire outlook on life both here and for eternity, but it opens up deeps of intelligence and manhood that had never been dreamed of. It not only seems to fill the hearts of believers with better thoughts, but it inevitably improves their economic condition. The change is seen in the very dress they wear, and it is for the better. Not that they are taught to adopt foreign clothing, for this is not the case, but on account of having more money through the increased earning capacity which better health gives them they can buy better garments.

Mission workers and the community do not emphasize the effect of becoming a Christian on the economic condition of those who enter the church, but it has been, and is, probably one of the very greatest factors which has led very many to become Christians. No one knows better than the missionary that the body is the chariot of the soul, and that if the wheels of the chariot are well-oiled, the vehicle will carry its freight to glory in much greater comfort. And, although the desire to better their social or economic status is not the entire motive that prompts so many of the lower classes to become Christian, yet there is no shadow of doubt that the purely spiritual motive often lags very far in the rear.

In spite of the fact that the motives of the people are mixed—and this is just as true in America—yet the result of the turning away from the darkness of ignorance

and superstition, and coming into the hope and assurance that is in Christ, is a miracle; and the meeting in Gauhati was a proof of the miracle. The fellowship, breadth of interest and outlook, and the sense of brotherhood which was evident among men who could often not understand the others' language, proved a similarity and reality of experience such as is not possible in any other faith or belief.

The great difficulty in a polyglot gathering of this kind is that of language. Hindustani is a common jargon that is known, more or less, all over India—usually somewhat less! It serves to permit travelers and traders from different countries to converse, but it is not sufficiently well known to be used as a general language for teaching religion. In Assam, the Assamese people from whom the land takes its name, do not even predominate. Their language and culture, however, does. These are so much superior to that of the surrounding tribes that they are permeating the hills on all sides. Many of the young men from the various tribes have had some education in the plains' schools, in which Assamese is the language used; but in addition to these young men are many more who through trading and visits to the plains have become familiar with the language. For these reasons it has become the only partially satisfactory means of communication for people living in Assam. Being the language of education, the only literature available for many of the tribes is in this speech. There is nothing really worthy of the name of a literature in their own language among any one of the hill-tribes which live on both sides of the valley. Aside from a few translations of the Bible, school-books, and a few pamphlets and tracts of various kinds, in the Garo, Naga, and Khasi dialects chiefly, there is no literature of any kind available for any of the hill

peoples excepting in the plain's languages. For these reasons the entire work of this Convention was conducted in Assamese, with a very occasional explanation for some group in their own tongue.

The degree to which the ideals of Christianity, as well as the differences of opinion which in the early centuries caused schisms and denominations today, have entered into the new community, is surprising. One of the outstanding Naga workers came with a number of others and said to the Padri:

"Sir, as you know, the Ao Nagas are a small tribe, but there are now Christians in every village. There are thirty churches and almost seven thousand Christians. But there is a serious condition of affairs among us. Some of us have learned, not only from our study of the New Testament, but from our knowledge of other organizations of our own church, that each local body should be free from outside control and should manage its own affairs without interference from any who are not members of that particular church.

"For many years we have had our Ao Association, but a committee which was appointed some years ago, to act as an advisory body, and which was subject to reelection each year, has simply perpetuated itself and assumed such authority that it will now go into any of our local churches, and if it does not happen to like the pastor or officers will dismiss them with or without the consent of the members. In one case they went so far as to institute a suit in court against a church in order to have their own way. A very large delegation has come to this meeting, and as you are to give an address on this same subject, we request you to speak clearly and slowly so that they may all understand, for many of them know very little Assamese."

And this from a tribe that a little over fifty years ago found its enjoyment in head-hunting! Their Association reported that it is carrying on all the evangelistic work in its own area with no aid from the Mission, and in addition to this is sending evangelists to neighboring tribes. The sixteen churches among the Lota Nagas are to a large extent the result of their work. At the time Doctor Clark came into the hills the Aos and the Lotas were strangers and enemies! During this one year they reported nine hundred and sixty baptisms.

A visitor from America attended the meetings at Gauhati and enjoyed them though he could not understand any of the languages used. He sat just back of the Padri who was very interested in his reactions. Not having been introduced, and not even knowing who the stranger was, as he had come in a little after the opening of the day's meeting, he had not spoken to him. While listening to the remarks of the chairman, who spoke in Assamese when he was introducing the delegates from Goalpara, the Padri heard the visitor back of him say aloud:

"Wonderful! Marvelous!"

Turning to see who was so interested, he noticed that the man was a stranger and asked him quietly, "Can you follow the speeches?"

"No," he answered, "but I can get the spirit. This is astonishing! You missionaries merely sit in the audience, and they carry on themselves. They don't seem to need you. They know how to do it! It's like Pentecost! Just like Pentecost!"

"We don't notice that part of it," answered the Padri. "Practically all their meetings in their churches and Associations are now conducted entirely without any need of our assistance. Shall I translate a little as they go on?"

"Yes, yes. Please do."

"The Chairman is saying: 'This is the delegate from Goalpara. Let's give him a rousing welcome.'

"The delegate says: 'Brothers and sisters. My report from Goalpara is brief. We have no missionary in our area now. It has been but ten years since any one came to preach the gospel to us, and now again we are left without a leader. Our numbers are few and we realize our own ignorance, but we continue to tell of the peace that we have received. Within the past four years the number of members of churches has doubled, although almost a hundred had moved away to Mongoldai. Recently two more large churches have been established, and our total membership is now four hundred and forty-six. We have two good schools. All this we carry on ourselves."

In an aside the Padri interpreted: "When he refers to having no missionary, the explanation is that on account of the constant reduction of funds from America for the past years, it was necessary to abandon a field, that is, the evangelistic work, or to give up some of the educational or medical work, or to reduce the large expense of administration; and it was decided to give up evangelism (which is the fundamental work that Missions should do), and the Goalpara District has been abandoned by the Mission. But as you see, the people have a voice in a matter of this kind, and they are carrying on. It makes work like this worth while when the people get the real spirit of the thing and become self-dependent."

"Marvelous indeed!" breathed the visitor.

The report for Sibsagar was next given. The delegate had come to Assam in his youth as a coolie, but he was no longer one. He was but a boy when a recruiter persuaded him to go with him from his home in central

India to work on the Doomadalang Tea Estate in the Sigsabar District in far upper Assam. The agreement under which he came was at that time very binding. In reality, though not in name, the coolies of the early days were slaves. Guards were kept to prevent them from leaving the gardens, and if one did escape he would be hunted and if caught suffer severely. But this is entirely different today. However, Jetu was very industrious and dependable. He was more intelligent than the average coolie and soon became an overseer. His wants being few and he having an inclination to save, it was not long till he had enough money in hand to buy a cow. Possession increased his desire for property, and in a short time he had another. Then he bought a pig, and in the course of a few years he was able to start a little farm on waste land that the Government had thrown open for settlement. After the completion of his agreement he left the garden, but for many years continued to work for it during the months when there was little to do on his farm. In this way he earned money and has become very comfortable indeed.

While he was still living on the garden he met a Christian evangelist when he was on his way to the weekly market. The man was of the same race, a Munda, and it was not long till they found that their people had come from the same neighborhood. Gradually Jetu became interested in the teaching of the evangelist. There was nothing to interfere with him in changing his religion. In the home country this would have been difficult, for the close social organization of every race and tribe always seeks to prevent its members from breaking established customs. But here in Assam it was different. The very fact of having left the old homestead and its influence

had weakened the hold of the old social order on his life. Hence it was easy for him to become a Christian, and he is a type of the many thousands of the coolie population in Assam who make up the very large majority of the Christian community on the plains.

When Jetu was baptized he was given the name of Probhu Doial, "The Lord is Merciful." Now he is the pastor of the largest and most aggressive church in the Sibsagar Association. In addition to this he is the *Gaobura,* the village headman, and has certain magisterial powers delegated to him by the Government.

In making his report for the field, he said:

"Friends, as this Convention meets but once in two years, my report is for that period. Our Sibsagar Association, as many of you know, is the mother of all the work in Assam, for the missionaries who first came into Assam have continued their work from there all these years. But we have not become too old to change, if we feel that this is for the best, and on this account we have separated ourselves from our child—the Golaghat Association, for we knew that this child of ours is now well able to walk alone; and instead of holding a joint Association as in the past, we now meet separately, each in our own area. This has been a great blessing to both of us, for each of the annual meetings has been better attended than when the two met together.

"In the Sibsagar Association there are now sixty-five Christian communities, of which thirty are regularly organized churches. There are almost three thousand members. During the past two years there were five hundred and thirteen accessions. All the baptizing was done by our own ministers; our missionary is our teacher, but he does not do for us what we can do for ourselves.

THE BRAHMAPUTRA OPPOSITE GAUHATI

Showing Peacock Island on Which Is the Umanand Temple. This Picture Was Taken During Low Water. In the Rains the Entire Channel Is Filled with Water Some Twenty Feet Above Low-water Level

"We have raised two thousand rupees [over seven hundred dollars] for paying evangelists to preach, but three or four times this amount has been collected for all church expenses."

The visitor from America followed everything carefully. His questions showed his deep interest, but toward the end of the meeting he said: "I am so sorry that I must go. I have my program laid out and have to catch the train. But I am exceedingly grateful to you. I am astonished that the people have advanced so much. It is wonderful! Marvelous!"

The spirit of self-dependence and self-reliance shown by the Sibsagar Association was very interesting. They had worked in harmony with the other Associations, and had had the courage to separate themselves from Golaghat when they felt that it was for the good of the work. They had worked in entire harmony with their missionary, but their own elected committees carried all the load of administration; but as this was in accord with his own teaching it was a source of the greatest pleasure to him. It was indeed an interesting condition of affairs; excepting that he was elected each year as a member of the Standing Committee, he had no official connection with the churches in his field, nor any authority over them.

The parallel between the condition of the church as recorded in Acts, and the church of today in Assam is striking. The time of the large organizations has not yet come. There are no wealthy bodies. Very few of the congregations have really good buildings in which to meet. There are very few ordained ministers, and practically none who have given themselves to the work of the ministry in the sense of considering it as a life-work. In the Early Church the pastors for the most part farmed, were mer-

chants, or followed some other occupation as a means of livelihood; so in Assam, the pastors are chosen from among the members of the churches. The majority depend on farming. The small stipends they receive from the congregations are by no means sufficient to support their families. But as often as not the salary is in kind instead of money—rice, assistance in farming, or some such help. Nor do the evangelists and teachers employed by the Associations receive sufficient money to live on, and they too eke out their pay by farming in their spare time. One disadvantage of this method has been inherent in it from the beginning. We read that some of the early churches censured their pastors because they spent so much time away on business trips that the churches suffered; so it is in Assam, and in India for that matter; the workers are so poorly paid that they are compelled to spend too much time in earning a living to permit them to do their best as preachers or teachers.

Still, the amount of work done and the spirit of these poorly paid workmen are worthy of all praise. Tongkan, the Garo, was an example of this. He was one of the first, if not the first person, from his tribe to go to America, and, although it was not possible for him to remain to finish his college work, yet when he returned to his hills he was the best-trained man of the tribe. The Government officers were in need of just such men, and offered him seven times the salary he would receive if he worked for the Mission. But, though he would have been glad for the larger income, he felt that his first work was to preach. When he returned to Tura, he was asked to take charge of the school in that station, and for a short time did so. But one day he came to Doctor Mason and said:

"Sir, I feel that I should preach. I am not content to do anything else."

"But," answered Doctor Mason, "we cannot pay you as much as you are receiving. There is not the appropriation for it."

"Oh, that is all right," answered Tongkan, "it is not a matter of salary. Only I must preach."

And preach he did to the end of his life. Year in and year out he made the circuit of his native hills, usually carrying his own pack, preaching the gospel, baptizing, and helping the new churches become established. He was one of the small number who have been ordained among the Garos.

After the meetings of the Convention in Gauhati would close for the evening, the leaders would often gather in one of the huts, and seated on the ground with a single lantern in the midst of them to give a little light, would tell of the experiences with animals and men that occurred as they tramped over the dusty or muddy roads. Numbers of them had met with opposition also; in fact the days of persecution are not really over. All that is lacking is the opportunity. One evening when it was rather cold and they had a little fire at which to warm their hands, Patras, the evangelist from Sibsagar, was talking of the work in that field. He said:

"This last year a most peculiar thing happened on a garden in my section. There were just two families of Christians living among the coolies on that estate. It happens to be one of the few tea-gardens that are owned by Indians. The manager was an Assamese of one of the best families, but he was not very popular among his employees.

"One of the Christians was named Habel. He was

sober and industrious, and on account of these qualities he had been made an overseer. Having been able to save several hundred rupees he was foolish enough to loan it to the manager without security, and he did not even receive a receipt for it. As he began to press for at least some kind of a writing that would be a security, the manager became angry and threatened him with a beating, and in other ways tried to make him leave the garden. If he should go the manager felt that it would relieve him of any chance of ever having to pay the debt. He even degraded Habel, compelling him to do the work of a common coolie, but finally he ordered him to chop the wood for the boiler in the factory, and there is no harder job than this on the garden. But Habel refused. He knew the reason and the purpose of it. But he would not leave the place.

"Calling this insubordination, the manager ordered another overseer and a watchman to thrash Habel and drag him to the bungalow before all the other coolies. They pounded him till he was unconscious; the manager himself even joined in and beat him with his shoe, and thus added the worst kind of insult to the injustice.

"The other Christian man had seen all this, but as he was alone could do nothing to help; and, seeing Habel apparently dead, he feared that his turn would come next. Being a Christian and also a friend of the beaten man it is altogether probable that this would have occurred, had he not bolted. He went to Naga Hat, a Christian village which was some three miles away, and told Mosa, the evangelist who lived there, that Habel had been killed. Taking several other men from the village they went immediately to the garden, but could not find any trace of Habel. The manager told them that he had run away.

They were not prepared to believe this when they knew that the last time he had been seen he was apparently dead.

"It was also well known that a favorite threat of that manager was that if any coolie ever tried to abscond, he would be caught, brought back, and burned under the boiler. And, who can tell, it may have happened many times. On this account when they could not find Habel, and as none of the other coolies would give them any information, because they feared the manager, Mosa went immediately to Sibsagar and told our Padri Sahib. As there was nothing else that could be done he went to the police and informed them. A sub-inspector and a number of constables went to the garden to investigate, but even they were not able to learn anything. The man was not to be found, and it began to look serious for the manager. It is said that much money flowed like water also!

"It is a shame that our people will go to work for those 'black' men. They get much better treatment from the managers that are white, and better pay too. Still, it was a full month before anything was seen of Habel. He turned up in Sibsagar and went to see the Padri. He had been in hiding all this time. The wounds he had received as well as the fright and other mistreatment, had caused him to have fever, and also on account of the fear that he had that they would come after him to beat him again, he had remained hidden in a village several miles away."

"The peculiar coincidence that I started to tell you is this: Within two weeks after the beating had been done, the brother of the manager died. Inside three weeks more the manager himself took sick in Dibrugahr; and the disease was such that even before he was dead his body

was so decayed that it was almost impossible for them to carry him out to burn him afterward, according to the Hindu custom—for he was a strict Hindu!

"Then within another two weeks, the overseer who had helped in the beating of Habel, took sick and died—and it was not more than another three weeks till the watchman—the last of those who had had part in the wrong-doing—was also dead! It is most marvelous! The Hindus in that section are now afraid of us, they say that the Christians have very strong charms! But it was a most peculiar happening indeed!"

The other evangelists sat in wonder, and Probhu Doial said:

"Who knows? God may have—— Well, who knows?"

The bazaar preaching of the last day of that Convention was similar to some of the times in the history of the Early Church when many men of many lands and tongues crowded around to listen to preaching. There were Assamese, Bengalis, Nagas, Garos, Kasis, Marwaris, Rabhas, Kacharis, and many other races represented among the thousands who heard and saw the preachers all through the bazaar on that Sunday. In addition to the missionaries with their white faces, Indian workers from at least eight different peoples preached the story of a gentle Saviour whose message was love; and the crowds stood silent and respectful till the waning light of day warned them that it was time to return to their homes. As the large band of Christians started to leave the bazaar with their banners flying and the drums that they had brought keeping time to the hymns they began to sing, the sun set in the west across the Brahmaputra, and the golden dome of the temple which crowns the Kamakiva hill gleamed rich in

the departing light. At the same time the deep throb of the great drums that warn the gods that the day is ended and that it is time for them to retire for the night, boomed out upon the air. But as it were in answer, the bell of the church in the town, the drums of the Christians, and their songs of love and peace, rose and beat against that stronghold of darkness and superstition. It was the shout of victory of the conqueror of demon rule that has rivaled that of dark Africa's Mumbo Jumbo—Mumbo Jumbo has met his master in the Christ of God.

Into the peoples of the beautiful valley of the Brahmaputra, the Son of Brahma, under the sharp eyes of head-hunters a new spirit has entered, and even among the tribes in their hill fastnesses the same Christ is conquering. The actual results in one Mission will serve to illustrate not only Assam but the whole of India. In less than one hundred years there has come into being a Baptist church having 41,000 members. During the year 1927 they supplied 651 workers, ten times the number of missionaries on this field. They provided the entire upkeep of over four hundred church and chapel buildings, paid the salaries of their pastors, and more than this paid a large number of the evangelists whom the missionaries assist in their preaching. When we remember that the average income of a family in India is but five dollars per month, the contribution of $21,886 by the churches during the year is remarkable—it proves the spirit that is in the Christian community.

The transformation wrought in the ideals of the peoples, not only of Assam but of India, in such a comparatively short period of time is astounding. The number of believers is impressive, their self-dependence and aggressiveness are indeed gratifying; but aside from this, and

possibly of even greater importance, is the impact that has been made on all classes of people. The loving, kindly spirit of the Christ of the Indian road has laid hold of the hearts of multitudes . . . and he *will* draw all men unto him.

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